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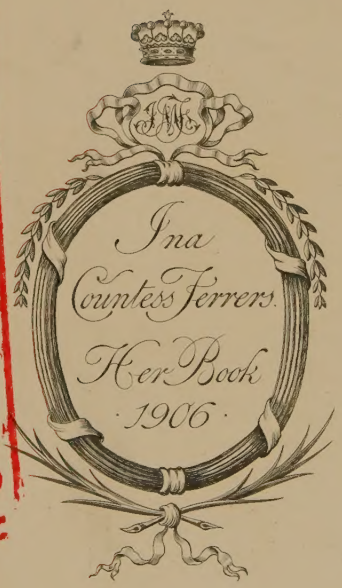

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NEW LETTERS OF THOMAS CARLYLE VOL. II

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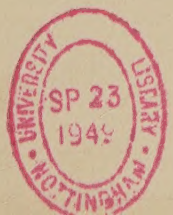
THE NEMESIS OF FROUDE

CARLYLE AND FRITZ.
In Hyde Park, 2 Aug., 1861.

NEW LETTERS OF THOMAS CARLYLE

EDITED AND ANNOTATED BY ALEXANDER CARLYLE WITH ILLUSTRATIONS VOLUME II

JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD
LONDON & NEW YORK MDCCCCIV



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Printed by
The Caxton Press, New York, U.S.A.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

1. Carlyle on Fritz. (*Drawn in Lithography by T. R. Way. From a Photograph taken in Hyde Park, 2d August,* 1861.) . *Frontispiece*

To face page

2. Scotsbrig House and Farm-Buildings. Home of Carlyle's Parents from May, 1826, to the end of their lives. (*From a Photograph by John Patrick.*) 82

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NEW LETTERS OF THOMAS CARLYLE VOL. II

NEW LETTERS OF THOMAS CARLYLE

LETTER 157

To Edward FitzGerald.

Chelsea, 23 August, 1845.

Dear FitzGerald—. . . Here is another small job for you. It seems a possibility at present that I may put in somewhere, by way of Appendix, these Anecdotes of Mrs. Bendysh,* which are in *Noble* (ii. 329). Now will you read those pages of Noble, once more, carefully over, with an eye that way. You will find one does not learn *where* Mrs. Bendysh lived ('near Yarmouth somewhere'), what her or her husband's business was, or anything about their economic peculiarities and earthly localities;—so that the whole matter looks there very much like a thing in Drury Lane.

Now I want you to ask the Essex Archdeacon,† or whoever he or she is that descends from Mrs. Bendysh, whether there is not in the Family any certain knowledge as to all these points, any clear Tradition even,—*any* light to be had that would complete what you see to be wanting in the business. You have a *Noble* have you not? or can get one about Bedford? I could cut you out these leaves and send them by post. Perhaps that will be best? You will then at once see what is wanting in general there. For the rest, the thing, if at all, will

* Cromwell's Granddaughter by Ireton.—E. F. G.

† Berners, of Woolverstone, Suffolk.—E. F. G.

be needed in a day or two.—So here *go* the leaves at a venture! Edit them yourself (make them ready for editing): that is a task I set you! *Till this day week:*—then return them to me with what you have made out.

Laurence, I am told, is now down in that quarter; actually gone thither with commission to take the Portrait.*

Yours ever truly,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 158

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Scotsbrig, 30 September, 1845.

My dear Brother—The time for the Packet drawing nigh, I being *here* where your chief interests all lie, cannot but get a line ready for you. I got to Scotsbrig almost three weeks ago, and have been loitering about, doing very little; but I can at least tell you the news of this Household, which I am very sure will be a welcome service to you.

Our dear old Mother was in waiting for me that morning Jamie brought me up from the Steamer; she has run about unweariedly ever since, and nothing can prevent her from the most restless endeavour to make her guest better and better off,—far better than he has any need or wish of. She is in what one must call very good health for *her;* not much weaker than when I saw her last: her hands shake a little more, I think, and that is almost all the change one notices in her. She varies considerably, however, from day to day; has slept indifferently

* Of Oliver, done in miniature by Cooper, in possession of Archdeacon Berners aforesaid; Laurence's copy of it being engraved as Frontispiece to Carlyle's Book.—E. F. G.

last night, for instance,—we cannot expect her now to be strong. She does not mourn audibly for your absence; indeed she says expressly with thankfulness, you seem for all your sadness of mind to be doing really better than there was any clear chance of here. Good Mother! She is quite cheery yet, when moderately well in health; looks back with still resignation on many a sorrow, and forward with humble pious trust. It is beautiful to see how in the gradual decay of all other strength, the strength of her heart and affection still survives, as it were, fresher than ever;—the *soul* of Life refuses to grow old with the *body* of Life; one of the most affecting sights! We were talking last night of the death of Margaret,—that unforgettable night when you and I rode down from Craigenputtock;—and were all again, as it were, brought together, the Dead of us and the Absent of us; in a sad but to me very solemn and profitable manner.—I am far from happy here; indeed in real fact, had I consulted but my own lazy feelings, I had much rather not have come: nobody knows what inexpressible sorrow and confusion it is to me to look on this old Annandale in these sick humours of mine. However, I am very thankful I did come. Amid the muddy confusions outward and inward, there are things taught me here which I can learn nowhere else. Let us be thankful for many blessings such as fall to the lot of few. Good Parents whom you *can* honour, it is the foundation of all good for a man. [*Here follows a long minute account of all the members of the Family.*]

. . . This is nearly all the news I have to give of Scotsbrig. As to the rest, I have seen almost nobody, nobody at all that I could help seeing; and can only report in general that the people seem all busy harvesting; that the weather is very plashy and wet. Indeed our Summer over all the Island was

generally dim and cold; people say the harvest is much better than was once expected. A very bad feature of it, however, is the Disease of the Potatoes: almost everywhere the Potatoes when nearly ripe are seized by a kind of *murrain*; wither in the stems; the Potato itself gets black-spotted, soft, and slowly or fast indubitably goes to *mush*. Jamie thinks he has lost about *half* of his: he has put up his swine to eat them as fast as possible out of the way. It is thought by some the Potato is about refusing to grow any more in these climates; which will be a frightful business indeed! All over Holland, Germany, etc., as well as in Britain and Ireland, this Potato Epidemic is prevalent, to a great extent, I fear, tho' nobody as yet can tell how great.

Near Frank Graham the Tailor's house (a little on the Skailwood side) is seen a heap of dug earth among the corn: it marks the course of the Railway in that quarter; which is just to be begun; and has raised wages, as I was saying: for two years there will likely be a greater briskness of demand for labour, and then the demand will end again; indeed it will mainly be the Irish that do the digging, I suppose; they are already crowding in great quantities into this quarter.

. . . Dear Brother, you must write a Letter to us soon; you will have more leisure now that the Winter is coming. A Letter of Tom's giving a minute account of all the domestic stock is still spoken of with much praise here! Tell him to try it again; and Jane too. You cannot be too minute. I must be off homewards again, in some week or ten days. The Book is *coming* out, I believe. You shall hear of me again. Farewell. T. C.

All here salute you; I design to make my Mother write her

own salutations, tho' her hand shakes. My blessings on you one and all. Be diligent, patient: "Work and hope!"

P. S.—*By his Mother:*

My dear Alick—I would like to write to you if I could, as this will testify; but send you my best wishes. Thank Tom for his good Letter; and tell Jane and him to write soon and tell me all their news.

May God keep and guide you all in His ways and fear, which is the prayer of your old Mother.—Give my kindest love to Jenny and all the dear little ones. May you all be in God's keeping. M. A. C.

LETTER 159*

To His Wife, Chelsea.

Scotsbrig, 8th October, 1845.

Dearest—Perhaps you will be anxious if I do not write a word this night; you shall have a little bulletin, therefore,—tho' otherwise there is almost *less* than nothing to be said. For in truth I am not very well—which means first of all, that I am dreadfully lazy, indisposed for any exertion but that of breathing: . . . I go strolling out every morning; wind round generally till I intercept the Postman; if I find a Letter from you in his pocket, it is the event of the day: I return home with it glad; get into the easiest combination of chairs, with some silly Book in my hand, or without any Book, except my own foolish faculties of Memory and Anticipation; and so, with a few dawdlings out and in, to the hilltop or farther, pensively pass the day. To-morrow I hope to be brisker; to-night, not

* This letter is in reply to No. 66, "New Letters and Memorials."

having yet had walking enough, I propose to go to Ecclefechan with this: walking under cloud of night being still much to my taste. Our weather yet continues dry; all the world has a certain mournful beauty, and sings strange unrhymed stanzas to me as I rove about in it.—I thank you for reminding me that I must write to Mrs. Russell; I will certainly do it to-morrow, if all go right.

The Printers sent me my Index*; another day had to be spent on that; it is now all fairly finished, and I hope never to hear of it more. Probably to-morrow the Title-page with the other adjuncts will arrive; then I shall bid good-b'ye to the whole business,—heartily sick of it, as I ever was of any. What next? We shall see by and by. My appetite for writing is considerably modified: but I have no other trade,—why should I wish any other? I will stick by my trade; and say a thing or two yet, if I live!

What you tell me to-day of Tennyson's Pension is very welcome indeed. Poor Alfred, may it do him good;—"a Wife to keep him unaisy," will be attainable now, if his thoughts tend that way. I admire his catholicity of humour too: "Would prefer a *lady*, but," etc.!† . . . By the bye, was it not I that first spoke of that Pension, and set it afloat in the world! In that case it may be defined as our *ukase* not less than Peel's. This world is a most singular place! . . .

Did you ever hear of Jane Johnston,—or of Mr. Johnston her Father, the drunken Surgeon, at Moffat, who used to beat his Wife (a Carlyle of the Satur), and forced her at last to leave him, with this one child; who was at School with me forty years

* Of *Cromwell*.

† See "New Letters and Memorials," i. 180.

ago and more? I daresay you know whom I mean. She became the Beauty of Annan; really a clever girl I believe: she went to see an Aunt in France, who had married the *Titular-Herr* of that Country, and gone over with him at the Peace: Jane married there too, and retired to the South of France with her Husband, as I think you already know too. Well, some time ago there came news hither of this tragic tenor: Husband and Jane went out to drive by some mountainous path one evening; the horse took fright, or misbehaved; all was overset; Jane alighted on the road, or caught by bushes; Husband and gig went down into the chasm: Jane on clambering down found him lying stone-dead; had to watch there all night to guard his body from wolves!—She has two children; she is older a little than I. *Sunt lachrymæ rerum.*

My *Friedrich der Grosse** went done last night: I read it with many reflexions; mean to inquire yet farther about the man. *Der Grosse Fritz:* if I had any turn for travelling, I should hold it very interesting indeed to go to Berlin, and try to make more acquaintance with him and his people. They are both of them very strange. Alas, what is the meaning of this that they call Literature? "German Literature" should have contrived to give us some melodious image of this greatest German Man, living in very difficult circumstances, next door neighbour to it! German Literature too is but a smallish matter in comparison.

Not a word to-night about my home-coming. This is not a night for taking resolutions: all I can say is, The time is now nigh. Total Idleness does not answer me long. *Mud* super-

* "I have a good book of Preuss's on Frederick the Great, which I am reading with satisfaction," Carlyle had written on the 23rd of September.

added would almost instantly send me off. For the rest I really am getting a little better in health,—really but very slowly. You would smile to see my *diet:* two light-boiled eggs with a cup of curds-and-cream, I have dined twice upon that.—Jamie advances rapidly in his shearing. Isabella seems to be a little better; comes up stairs almost every day. *Our Butter* was churned and put up two days ago. Is your *meal* done, or how? Adieu dear Goody mine! I love thee very well after all, my lassie! T. C.

LETTER 160

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 9th November, 1845.

Dear Jean—I might as well have left you that imperfect Copy of the *Cromwell* Book; the delay in publication has been greater than I anticipated. However it *is* now about coming out; if all goes right you will receive a big Packet in the early days of December, and one of the Copies for yourself, to read at your leisure in the winter time They have *advertised* it to come out on the 22d of this month. They are getting a *Portrait* engraved,—which I fear will not do much for it; the Engraver seemed a very *feckless* creature when I went to overhaul him. What is still worse, you will find it a surprisingly dull book;—and you and the Public must make up your minds for a piece of hard work in reading it, or else you will make nothing of it!—

I felt myself in rather good case when I arrived here, and so was Jane, too; but the cold fogs came upon us unawares. . . .

We have now however got westerly airs again; and the weather for November is beautiful. . . .

No work, or anything deserving the name, is likely to come out of me for a great while yet! I do nothing hitherto but read a little; and "*dauner*" about. Nay, on Friday or Saturday next we are to set off for our visit to the South Coast: great folks, very kind to us, and extremely rational, worthy people;—they promise me "a horse," and all manner of nice things; and the winter climate, I believe, is the best or one of the best in England, a thing that may be very useful, especially for Jane. How long we shall be able to stand it, is not settled yet; *so* long as it is pleasant; and that will depend on several things,—on my going idle, or being allowed fairly to work a little, for one thing! If you hear no more, you will suppose us to be there on Saturday next;—the place is near Portsmouth, close by the sea-shore, a mile or two from the Isle of Wight; about 70 miles by Railway, from this. You will write to us there by and by; the address is T. C., etc., Hon. W. Bingham Baring,* Bay House, Alverstoke, Hants.

The Doctor is very busy, working at a Translation of *Dante*. A long job: but now that he is got fairly fastened, I think he will complete it, and it may be really good for something,—better than *nothing*, as I say!—Good be with you, dear Jean.

Ever your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

* Afterwards Lord Ashburton.

LETTER 161

To the Rev. Alexander Scott, Paris.

Bay House, Alverstoke, Hants, 5 December, 1845.

Dear Scott—Your Letter reached me here a few days ago; and I may truly say has given me very great pleasure. That you adopt the view I have taken up about Oliver, and approve of my most ungainly ineffectual labour in regard to him, and give me your kind and hearty "*Euge!*" from over the water,—this is a really precious thing to me. The first voice of approval I have heard on the matter; of a sincerity and an insight not to be doubted. I will take it as the omen that by and by many more such, nay in a certain sense at last all such, will be added; and the poor Work turn out to be actually worth something. It has been a work of infinite disgust and hopeless toil; on the whole really a kind of *pious* work,—more like a work of piety than any other I have done. So far as this *is* the case it already has its reward: and for the rest, if the practical English mind do gradually come to understand, and believe as a very fact, that it once had a Hero and Heroism in this man and his work, my poor dry bones of a Compilation may prove to be a better "Poem" than many that go by that name! We will leave it with the Destinies; right glad that we, not entirely disgracefully, have got done with it,—ungainly as it is in these bad days.

You ask me how I proceed in taking Notes on such occasions. I would very gladly tell you all my methods if I had any; but really I have as it were none. I go into the business with all the intelligence, patience, silence and other gifts and virtues that I have; find that ten times or a hundred times as many

could be profitably expended there, and still prove insufficient: and as for plan, I find that every new business requires as it were a new scheme of operations, which amid infinite bungling and plunging unfolds itself at intervals (very scantily, after all) as I get along. The great thing is, Not to stop and break down; to know that *virtue* is very indispensable, that one must not stop because new and ever new drafts upon one's virtue must be honoured!—But as to the special point of taking Excerpts, I think I universally, from habit or otherwise, rather avoid *writing* beyond the very minimum; mark in pencil the very smallest indication that will direct me to the thing again; and on the whole try to keep the whole matter simmering in the *living* mind and memory rather than laid up in paper bundles or otherwise laid up in the inert way. For this certainly turns out to be a truth: Only what you at last *have living* in your own memory and heart is worth putting down to be printed; this alone has much chance to get into the living heart and memory of other men. And here indeed, I believe, is the essence of all the rules I have ever been able to devise for myself. I have tried various schemes of arrangement and artificial helps to remembrance; paper-bags with labels, little paper-books, paper-bundles, etc., etc.: but the use of such things, I take it, depends on the habits and humours of the individual; what can be recommended universally seems to me mainly the above. My paper-bags (filled with little scraps all in pencil) have often enough come to little for me; and indeed in general when writing, I am surrounded with a rubbish of papers that have come to little:—this only will come to much for all of us, To keep the thing you are elaborating as much as possible actually *in* your own living mind; in order that this same mind, as much awake

as possible, may have a chance to make something of it!—And so I will shut up my lumber-shop again; and wish you right good speed in yours.

In fact it seems to me this *Life of Dante*, if you were once fairly in the heart of it, would prove an excellent thing for you; the beginning of still better things; for yourself and for all of us. Can you not begin straightway to *write?* There is no end of inquiring; you never know what course you will go in, till you begin to experiment: it is a battle between the material and you. . . .

My Wife and I are here on the mild Hampshire coast on a visit to the Barings; a very strange existence for us; pleasant enough for the time;—and utterly *idle*. One wonders how a human Day is made to eat its own head off in so complete a manner! Most beautiful, most elegant, princely; but in the long run it would be suicidal. I contrive to save a long ride out of it for my own behoof; "a few reasonable words" as Goethe says; and at night a long spell of music, which in the silence, brings innumerable strange old thoughts, scenes and emotions, up into the private theatre again, to parade there, actually not much different from *spectres* I think!—. . .

All hands are here rejoicing since yesternight that Peel has decided to abolish the Corn-Laws: total and immediate! There is really something brave in poor Peel. . . .

Adieu, dear Scott. May God be with you always: so prays very sincerely Yours always,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 162

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 4 January, 1846.

Dear Jean—We came home about a week ago; so you can now direct the poor *Courier* hither again: the *two strokes* on the back of it will at least be welcome to me!

We had six very idle weeks down in Hampshire yonder;*—the *idlest* I can remember of my life; really nothing done at all, day after day, except dress, talk, eat and sleep (the latter, alas, rather imperfectly in my case!),—with flunkies running about you, and superfluous accommodations, at all hours! However the place was beautiful, and the climate: and here we are again, safe through it all; safe, or even perhaps slightly improved in some particulars.

I expected some composure here, and no great press of business; but am again obliged to fall to work, full tilt. Contrary to all expectation the Book on *Cromwell* proves *popular;* there is to be a new Edition of it before long! New Letters, etc., have turned up for me, which tho' of no great importance intrinsically, I am loth to omit: so, once more, I am obliged to duck into those horrid quagmires from which I had fancied myself forever escaped,—and am again making a considerable "*swatter*"† there! Happily it will not be long till the brunt of this second bout is over; and, at any rate (for there is nothing essential to be changed), I can make it as short as I like. No-

* At Bay House, Mr. and Lady Harriet Baring's.
† Splashing.

body has a right to *complain* that a Second Edition of his Book is needed! It means more cash to him, among other things.— Considerable reviewing of the Book goes on; very little of which do I see, no jot of it seek after. Here, in that *Nation* Newspaper which I send you to-day, is some balderdash of O'Connell's on the subject: mere jackassery; "di the naither ill na' guid!"—

Jack is actually coming home to you; making ready now to be off, next week. He is busy with some Translation of Dante; which is much better than doing nothing; it holds his hand in use, which of itself is something. We yesterday wrote away to Alick; his last Letter was a brave-looking one, and pleased us well for all its sadness.

Times do not look quiet in this part of the Earth: Corn-Law struggling, etc., etc., and too probably Famine in the rear of all. Our Potatoes here (the "best Potatoes," which also are uneatable) are selling at the rate of *Four for three half-pence:* they, and all the Potatoes we can get, are infected and uneatable, gradually *rotting;* we have decided to give them up here, and take to rice, or one knows not what. Many poor creatures are already on the streets with a look of pinching hunger in their faces: Ah me!—

I have a proof Print of Cromwell here, which I have some thought of sending to you for framing. Send me a Letter soon. Blessings to you all.

Yours ever,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 163

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 3 March, 1846.

Dear Brother—I want news again out of Annandale; it is not that I can promise much or almost anything of my own, in such a confusion as I am still surrounded with! I believe I have a natural *talent for being in a hurry;* which is a very bad talent. I might go along much more leisurely at present: yet I am always in a bustle; always feel as if, except at the top of my speed, I were not making any progress at all.—You must send me some further tidings of Scotsbrig and my Mother, and what you are all about there: that is the purport of my writing at present. I wrote a hasty Letter to Alick to-day too, as well as many things else: and I wind up the night with this little word of request to you.

The Printers have got pretty well thro' the First Volume; have some of their men busy upon the Second, I believe. I, for my part of it, am got into the second Invasion of Scotland as far as Dunbar Battle: I have clapt-in a variety of things; got the Supplement to the First Edition, etc., organized: and on the whole seem as if I had the back of the work broken; as if after about a month more of *fiking* * and cobbling (in a most painful *fascheous* † manner), I should have little left but to correct the Proofs that might remain. For my Third Volume is to have almost no change, that I yet know of. But something or other always starts up; and every new thing, is like fitting-

* Being busy with trifles. † Troublesome, irksome.

in a new *stave* into a made *stoup;* * an excessively unpleasant kind of work!

. . . Jane is gone up to Lady Harriet's to-night; the Lady sends her carriage of an evening for Jane, and they spend a couple of hours, talking, reading a thought of German (this I believe is rather *rare*), more frequently playing *chess* than doing German. Jane is sent home again between ten and eleven,—safe by the same conveyance.

. . . Our Corn-Law has to go thro' the Lords yet: the Commons majority of 97 was far beyond anybody's expectation; it does not seem likely that the Tories will persist in the Lords' to the uttermost extremity: but indeed I do not much care, for one! The chief influence it has on me is that of nearly insupportable tedium wherever I come athwart the *talk* about it: the thing is to be done; *fiat* then. (*End of letter wanting.*)

LETTER 164

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 13 March, 1846.

My dear good Mother—I am getting on better here than, I suppose, you sometimes apprehend by my blameworthy silences. In fact, it is not strenuous heavy labour at all that I have to do with; it is rather infinite *fash* and *fikery*,† writing innumerable Notes to stupid people, etc., etc., which provokes me much, and consumes all my time. However, the Printer is now fairly done with the First Volume; and *I* have, this moment, got done with the Second, and have it all ready for him; and as for

* A small wooden bucket.
† Troublesome and trivial work.

the Third Volume, it is a much lighter job, and requires very little in comparison. So about ten days hence, I expect really to have only the *Appendix* to do;—and in no great length of time to be free of that also; and have only Proofsheets to read; which will give me a deal more of leisure, and be a very welcome change!—I have added some 45 Letters or more; and done the Book no ill. Some of the new Letters you will like much: indeed I am not sure but you will have to read the whole Book again!—Considering the frivolous humour of most men, it is matter of great surprise to me how so many have taken to read this Book; and how very universally my character of [Cromwell] has been recognised as actually [correct]. So I must not grudge my labour upon it. In all probability this is the usefullest business I shall ever get to do in the world; this of rescuing the memory of a Noble and Thrice Noble Man from its disfigurement, and presenting him again to a world that stands much in need of the like of him: I do not know any worthier work a poor son of Adam that pretends to write at all could *do*, in the writing way!—

We have beautiful Spring weather here, though occasionally dim: I stay much within doors, and heed little the external babblements of Corn-Law and the like. Indeed I [*torn*] them. I go up to visit the [Barings] about once a week and that is almost my only outgoing.—Jane is going with the Lady Harriet out to the Country next week, about ten miles off;* to stay for a month, going and coming: I too am to go and come occasionally. It is a very pleasant place and will do her good.† . . .

Dear Mother, I wish you would write me a little Line, were

* Addiscombe Farm.

† See "New Letters and Memorials," i., 184, *et seq.*

it never so *shaky*. I wish at least somebody would tell me specifically how you are! Take care of the cold East winds; they are not good at this season; take care of yourself, dear Mother!—I will write again soon. My blessings to you all. Jane is out, and cannot send her regards.

Ever your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 165

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 16 April, 1846.

Dear Jean—. . . I forgot till this morning what was due to the poor sick Grier. Here are two sovereigns for the poor creature: the order is in *James's* name: you may either give the whole at once, or give it in instalments, as you know to be suitablest: perhaps, if his wife is a careful body, the whole at once might be cheerfuller for them.—Do not forget at anytime to give me some hint when any one belonging at all to me is in distress. There is no duty so sacred as that of pitying one another, and trying (what is rarely possible) to *help* one another a little. The poor Griers.—Ah me!

My Printers are nearly done with the Second Volume,—some three days of it yet. A month more, and then! Emerson has made a *bargain* for me in America for this *new* Edition; if anything come of that, we shall see. I had a Letter from him yesterday; and a strange dud of a Yankee Newspaper, which Jane has now got, and I think will send to some of you. . . .

LETTER 166

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Chelsea, 18 April, 1846.

My dear Brother—. . . Your Letter pleased me very much; and your new name of Bield,*—"better a wee bush than nae bield"; across the Water too, the same great sky envelopes us all! I am very glad and very sad both in one, to figure you toiling like a man, in your vocation, far away there. Brother Jack seems to lament that you are not merry of humour or of situation: alas, there is not any "mirth" for any of us any more! A serious heart can hope to be calm in this most serious world; but need not long to be joyful: joy is not our portion here; grim battle is; and some victory,—and what of peaceable and good the Great Father, in the Eternities, has appointed for us *after* battle! Courage! my brave Brother. We will try to work well and wisely, whether sad or cheerful, each in his task here; and look not to changeful Fortune, but to something far beyond that, for our blessedness.—And withal let us not be *sad*, but quiet, clear and free; prepared for all things.

I also liked little Jane's Letter immensely! Poor little creature: it seems but yesterday when I first saw her on your knee at Scotsbrig, with little hands like her Father's; and now she is growing a young Canada lass, full of sense and spirit I see; and will do a pretty part there, I hope! The Letter is to be returned from Scotsbrig for Jane's (my Jane's) especial

* For Alick Carlyle's homestead. Bield, *Scottice* for shelter.

perusal, who being in the Country* still has not yet seen it. She comes home now in two days; and this is ended. I have sent *little* Jane a Newspaper to-day, or kind of three-halfpenny Journal, as memorial of me.

The Irish are starving, there will be bad work before the new food of the year can come! Our Parliament meanwhile goes on debating its Anti-Corn-Law; perfectly plain that Peel must prevail,—so that few people read their jargon: nevertheless there it goes on, and will go, it is said, throughout the whole Session.

. . . Adieu, dear Brother,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 167

To Thomas Ballantyne, Manchester.

Chelsea, 28th April, 1846.

Dear Sir—I have received your copy of the *Examiner* to-day; and am very glad indeed to see you get along so handsomely. Continue to tell a straight manful story about what comes before you; and people will not fail to listen. They are getting every day more prepared to hear one's full mind spoken about all manner of matters.

Since I saw you I have passed an evening with Mr. Cobden; whom I found, what all the world find him, a most distinct, ingenuous, energetic well-conditioned man;—very like getting through *work;* of which he has already done a good spell, and will yet have more to do. Nobody here seems in the least to understand what will become of the Parliament and Peel's

* At Addiscombe Farm, with Lady Harriet Baring.

Bill; nobody that I see reads a word of the Debates, all men seem sick of them, none knows where they will end. The confusion seems deepening every day; and to me at times issues lie visible in it which are very far from exhilarating! We must even let the Destinies do their will.

The new edition of *Cromwell* is now out of my hands, all but the Proofsheets; the Printers say they will have it ready about the beginning of June. It has met with a very unexpected reception in the world:—I fancy in fact it will far survive all my other Books; and may be the beginning of great benefit to this bewildered world, in various ways.

Since Mr. Espinasse * is still with you, I wish you would impart to him (send after him to Edinburgh if necessary) the following tidings: That there are to be, either here or in America, or in both countries, new editions straightway of these Books of mine, The *Miscellanies, Sartor, Heroes, French Revolution;* the whole of which I have to read over again for errors. Mr. Espinasse knows what is expected of him, according to his opportunities, in that case. *Heroes* and *F. Revolution* I believe come *first.* If you will tell him this, it is all the message.—I am very glad you made him halt a while in Manchester: I hope you will find some good work for him there yet. He will

*Francis Espinasse, author of "Literary Recollections," a most interesting and valuable book. Espinasse was for many years a valued friend of Carlyle; and the story quoted by Mrs. Carlyle in Letter 127 of the "New Letters and Memorials," about his "renouncing his allegiance to Carlyle," was "the spiteful invention of an enemy" of Espinasse, and is totally devoid of truth. The story was repeated by Mrs. Carlyle simply to amuse her husband, and was, of course, never believed by him or her. The friendly relations between Mr. Espinasse and Carlyle were never interrupted; and Carlyle to the last always spoke and wrote of his old friend with a kindly and grateful feeling.—Mr. Espinasse is happily still living (1903).

quit his "Sarcasms" by and by; and open himself abroad to more genial recognitions, which will come out in a fruitfuller dialect.

I am in much haste, as usual; I send you many good wishes and regards; and remain always,

Very sincerely yours,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 168

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 18 July, 1846.

Dear Jean—. . . Just a fortnight ago Jane went off to Lancashire; in a rather weakly way, much worn down by the hot confusions of this place: she is with the Paulets ever since,* and very quiet by the seashore; which, I hope, will by and by tell upon her; but as yet she does not report much improvement.—I myself am busy getting anchor lifted; decided to quit this scene of noise in about three days hence; but not yet very completely certain as to what mode of travel I shall adopt, or where my stages are to be. I feel a kind of call to get into green places for a few days, if possible into deep solitude and silence! I even think of getting a knapsack and stick and setting out for a few days of *walking;* I have a terrible reluctance to any *active* adventure whatever; but this perhaps really would compose me a little,—perhaps I *ought* to do it! In any case, I must land at Seaforth House, Liverpool, some way or other, not many days hence; over from which to Annandale and Nithsdale my course is not likely to be long delayed.

* At Seaforth House, near Liverpool. See "New Letters and Memorials," i. 142, 186, *et seq.*

The probablest way, after all, is that I shall stow myself like luggage, in the old fashion, into the Liverpool Railway, and so be bowled along: that is the shortest plan, but it has grown very disgusting to me. . . .

One of the items of luggage I am bringing with me is an oil picture of myself for my Mother! It was drawn some years ago* by Laurence, and is really rather good,—infinitely better than common. It will need to be framed at Dumfries; and, I think, may be as well sent over to you from Liverpool *direct*. . . .

Your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 169

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Dumfries, 2 September, 1846.

My dear Alick—Before quitting Scotland, I will here, in a very confused element, among Jean's children on a Dumfries *Wednesday*,† write you a hurried word. I have been in this native region the better part of a month; left London about the end of July, and joined Jane in Lancashire whither she had gone a little while before me; abode there about two weeks; then came over to Scotsbrig, where I have been, off and on, ever since. Jane could not muster resolution to accompany or follow me; she has lingered to and fro in the regions of Liverpool or Manchester ever since; and is this very day, as I understand, travelling homewards by the railway, to arrive at Chelsea, and be quiet again, *to-night*. She was not at all in a

* July, 1838; see *ante*, i., p. 132.

† Market day.

strong state when I left her; but I believe has improved since, tho' to all appearance she is but weakly still. . . . .

Our good old Mother met me on the *close* at Scotsbrig with her welcome once again; and has yesterday again given me her silent farewell,—a very *wae* affair for both of us! It is inexpressibly sad to me, such a parting, after one of these confused visits; and I often think it would be better for me if I never came again! But that ought not to be either, while the opportunity is left.—Our good Mother is in her usual health, not specially complaining of anything; but now very feeble, easily struck down with any whiff of cold or the like. She walked out with me sometimes as far as the top of Middlebie Rig; was cheery and patient of heart, and anxious as ever about one and all of us. . . .

Jack has come thus far with me; for I am going round by Ayr and Belfast (in Ireland) to vary the route a little; and do not yet expect to be home for about a fortnight. Jack, as you know, has been at Scotsbrig for several months; our Mother seems to be rather the better for him; and he does not yet see any way of being busy to better purpose than here. I wish we saw him *settled* somewhere, poor fellow.—Jenny * came down, to assist during my stay at Scotsbrig; I doubted we were too *crowded* about our poor Mother, and did her harm with our confusions; but she would not let us say it. Jenny is to stay yet a week; Jack sees me away here, and then returns. All are well and seemingly doing well here. The like at Gill, where we saw them yesterday; busy *inning* and mowing. All join in the kindest affection to you. Write *immediately*, if you

* Mrs. Hanning, now living alone with her two daughters in Dumfries, her husband having failed in business and gone to Canada.

have not written by this Packet just arrived. Adieu dear Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 170

To Alexr. Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Chelsea, 3rd Oct., 1846.

My dear Brother—. . . I went along by Ayr two days after that Letter;* crossed from Renfrewshire to Belfast in Ireland; went down the Coast there so far as Dublin; and after a few days, crossing to Liverpool, got home again; heartily wearied, and glad to *rest* anywhere. Ireland did not rejoice me much. A sad country at present; bad husbandry; rags, noise and ineffectuality: from Belfast all the way to Dublin I hardly saw a dozen fields completely fenced. To a man on the Coach I remarked, "What is the use of fencing at all, if this is the way of it? Leave one gap in your field, it is quite the same, surely, as if you had not put a thorn in it at all!"— The Potatoes, as you know, are totally a ruin, this year, there and everywhere. Nothing but sheer famine and death by hunger for millions in Ireland,—had not the Government interfered, most wisely, and signified to the Landlords of the Country that *they* would have to assess themselves, to look out for work and wages to these poor wretches of peasants and see that they did not famish. This appears to me the most important Law ever passed for Ireland; the beginning, I do hope, of a new time for that wretched Land: I almost *rejoiced* at the black Potato fields, which had brought it about; and bade the Potatoes "Go about their business, there," since the loss of them was leading us a little towards justice and a better sort of food for

* Of September 2nd, the preceding letter.

men! . . . Indian corn, I suppose, must be the substitute; we are trying to learn how to cook it so as to be palatable with fresh-meat, and shall succeed by and by. *Here* at present it is selling at *two-pence a pound*, being a rarity as yet!—In Dublin I saw O'Connell haranguing his beggarly squad in "Conciliation Hall," too; perhaps the *most* disgusting sight to me on that side of the water. He is sinking, however, I think; that is another good symptom.

At Liverpool, where my stay was brief, I made due inquiry about the Box for "Bield, near Brantford." It had actually sailed for Montreal, addressed to you as above: in no great length of time after this Letter reaches you, I hope you may have one from Montreal announcing that the Box has arrived *there*, and telling you when and how to look for it at Brantford. The carriage was to be all paid; I hope they will attend to that. In the Box itself there was nothing of much moment to you except as a memorial from us; Jane and I packed it ourselves (very *full* indeed) the day before I went across from Liverpool to Scotsbrig: a Pilot-coat, a Pilot-hat (very strange articles) for yourself and also for Tom; a Cloak for Jenny (and ditto for little Jane—hers was one of big Jane's); some Books, and other sundries: you will receive them with pleasure for the sake of the feeling they convey. Inside is a tin coffer with a lock, which I thought might be useful to you as a repository for papers, etc.: it is crammed with various articles;—and one (there, I believe) is a knife bought by Jane herself, which is a gift from her to *you*. All the women things were bought by her; but this was with her own money, and destined as I say. There is nothing more that need be explained about the cargo, that I recollect of. . . .

Dear Brother, I must now finish. We got your account of the puzzle you were in at harvest-time; and how nevertheless you succeeded in extricating yourself. Courage! I like the resolute patient manful temper you exhibit; there is more good in that than there can be evil in anything. Persevere, persevere; every day, if you keep your eyes open, will make you wiser. I delight much to think of you labouring away among your Bairns; seeing them *grow* around you in all ways. Tom will be a strong fellow now! Little Jane will teach us one day how to cook our Indian Meal for dinner.—Adieu, dear Brother, God's blessing on you all.

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 171

To Dr. Carlyle.

Chelsea, 25 October, 1846.

My dear Brother—The Bookseller's offer* turns out to be but a small matter! I had begun to dread in secret that it might result in some such issue: and here we see it. No money in it at all; that is the real meaning; for as to the "Second edition," etc., there is nothing but uncertain moonshine in that. I believe however, it is the real answer you will get from "the Trade" as to this enterprise which has hung before you so long: you have now the materials for deciding what you will do with it; and that is something to have. . . .

I was at Sir Jas. Clark's,† dining, the other night; he had been so civil about Christie, etc., I could not refuse: the indi-

* For Dr. Carlyle's Translation of the *Inferno* of Dante.

† The eminent physician (1788–1870).

gestion consequent thereon still hangs about me. He was very civil, asked about you and so forth; indeed I find him a very simple-hearted humane man, with far more *in*articulate wisdom about him than any that comes out in the shape of speech. Forbes * was there too; Dr. Arnott and another; and the hero of the night was one Baron Stockmar, a shrivelled shrewd little German, once a kind of Doctor I believe, who resides at Coburg, and hangs about Prince Albert and that clan, it would seem. We did well enough together; and I came home with my indigestion and the feeling of "duty done."—. . .

We have to go off on Wednesday, to the Grange (Alresford, Hants, Lord Ashburton's); are to stay for a week: one of the joyfullest things would be my landing safe home again; that is my real humour at present on it! I will send my Mother a Letter from that place; a Parcel for her is already on the way towards Dumfries. Affection to her and to them all.

Ever your

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 172

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 20 December, 1846.

Dear Sister Jean—Your two pretty little *wristikins* † arrived safe last night; and the kind little Letter with them, which with its tone of sadness and almost of solemnity very much

* Edward Forbes, naturalist, palæontologist, etc. Dr. Arnott is probably Dr. Neil Arnott, inventor of the water-bed, the "Arnott Stove," "Arnott Ventilator," etc.

† Small woollen cuffs.

affected the poor *Missus* in her present weak state. She directs me to send you many kind thanks, till she be able to answer for herself.

We have, as you surmise, been in a considerably ugly kind of puddle for some three weeks back; and are not yet entirely out of it, tho' coming out now, we hope. The Edinburgh Servant * proved an entire failure; one of the most useless, insolent, canting, unendurable pieces of human Dishonesty I have ever set eyes on: one of those unfortunate creatures whom the "Penny Ladies" educate (Jane's Aunts had been very busy with this one); who get themselves all filled with abstruse evangelical doctrines, simpering courtesies, and such like hypocritical shews, and are left totally ignorant that unless you can do your *work* in this world there is no hope for you here or elsewhere! The unfortunate slut could do no work at all, and would do none; Jane caught a bad cold running after her, encouraging, trying to teach her (with but little hope, I think); was obliged to take to bed; on the third day after which, our courageous conscientious Help (on a Saturday night late, it was) fairly broke down; declared that she must be off to-morrow. She went accordingly:—you can fancy what a time we have had since; with Miss Welsh here as a *guest;* Jane still confined to her room (*altogether* till yesternight for a while at tea), and no servant here, but an old half-dunce, that was suddenly surrendered to us, whom I call *Slow-coach,* and who also well deserves the name!—However Jane *is* now getting better; in hopes to be out again in the course of the week; Miss Welsh too will go (for tho' she is in the highest degree assiduous, and patient of all confusion, a *stranger* is no acquisition in such an

* "Pessima," see "New Letters and Memorials," i. 219.

emergency): after which we set regularly to *get* a proper servant, and shall hope to be all on our old footing again. . . .

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 173

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 25 March, 1847.

My dear Sister—. . . Clouden Bank* is very tempting: nevertheless I believe we must not think of it at present. Many things are to be decided here; great practical riddles, such as arise in our life-pilgrimage, and are in fact our *life:* I must not fly away from the solution of them; but wait it out here,—and try, above all, to get it *rightly* out; that is the point. Scotland looks now like a kind of "Chelsea Hospital" to me; whither I cannot well return except with my *discharge* in my pocket, and some wooden leg to show for myself! Poor old Scotland.—And yet perhaps if the railway were in action, why should not one come and live there (*without* being invalided), and make London still one's headquarters? We shall see by and by. London, with many drawbacks, has one advantage: it is the home of *Freedom,* for the like of me. In good truth, no king in all the earth is so royal as any poor thinking man can here be, with an independent heart in his body, and barely money in his pocket to pay his way. All manner of princes, dukes and drakes go by him like as many Phantasms; he, in his rusty coat, alone has meaning,—and is even alone *felt* to have. A king he, as I often say, and the only king: a king with *one*

* A small property near Dumfries.

subject! * Upon the whole it is much more difficult to manage that, I believe, in any other place than it is in huge reeky London here: one must struggle to be content with reek, etc., in virtue of that.

Poor old Mary Grier, I am heartily sorry for her new mischance! She certainly had little need of an addition to her complicated difficulties, of poverty, old age, and all the rest. Can anything be done for her? I suppose there could, and must; and yet by me, I know not what. I wish you would consider the whole matter, you and James, and suggest what possibility there is. In the meanwhile, if, as is likely, you see any possibility of helping her by a trifle of money, I bid you borrow a sovereign from James for me, and give it out to her as you find suitablest:—I will faithfully pay; and thank you, for being my *almoner* in this case, over and above. Do not neglect this. Alas, old age is itself a sufficient claim: and there are many other ills accumulated on that poor old body. Do not let her want for any help that I could justly undertake to give her; but warn me of it, call on me for it, you who are within sight.

Your accounts of our good Mother are still favourable, tho' not quite unclouded: I shall want to hear *instantly* again; the sooner some of you can write, the better. I need not bid you be kind and gentle to her, good old Mother. In my solitude here (for I like far best, for most part, to be *alone*), she is often present to me: her life and my own, as it lies buried for us in

* Carlyle much admired that beautiful little poem, "The Character of a Happy Life," by Sir Henry Wotton, the last stanza of which is:

"This man is freed from servile bands
"Of hope to rise, or fear to fall;
"*Lord of himself*, tho' not of lands;
"And having nothing, yet hath all."

the "Halls of the Past," often comes up before me, all transfigured into *spirit;* and simple voices speak strange things to me out of the old dead years. "Every man's Life," says one of the Germans, "is a *Bible,* if he will read it." Which is most true. For the great God made us; and in marvellous ways goes with us, guiding us to the end. Amen, Amen!—Of all the blessings I have had in this world, surely the *first,* as I feel well, were the Father and Mother I was born of. No Dukedom, or Princedom is worth rating beside that Corner-stone of all one's destinies in this world, and all one's works there,—the Parentage one had! Let us thank God in this evil time; and along with our afflictions joyfully accept what truly makes them all into *blessings,* if we are wise!—

Here is a clipping from an American Newspaper, which Jane cuts out for you; not worth much, she thinks; but the carrying of it will cost *nothing.* It is a Yankee woman's doing (one Miss Fuller, a friend of Emerson's, whom we saw here, rather a good woman): I remember I *was* somewhat loud upon her and upon certain crotchets of hers.—Emerson, I rather guess, is coming over next "Fall," on a Lecturing expedition; chiefly to Lancashire, etc., but to include London too: we had a Manchester Philosopher * last night here, who is arranging the matter for him. I like the man Emerson right well, and have reason to do so.

To-night Thomas Erskine is coming to us to dine; Jack is to be here too and no other. . . .

T. Carlyle.

* Alexander Ireland.

LETTER 174

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Addiscombe, 7 May, 1847.

Dear Jean—Having a few minutes to myself, during a day otherwise altogether devoted to *idleness*, I think I may as well write you a word or two: it will probably be the only *good action* appointed me till to-morrow or later! This is the country house of the Barings, kind people with whom we were in the winter: the Lady has been to Paris, seeing her Mother who was unwell there; she decided, after her return, to have a quiet week in the country here; and so got Jane out with her last Monday, I being appointed to follow when I liked and bring her home. I came accordingly on Wednesday afternoon, and to-morrow we are to return: a wholly idle time for all of us,—the like of which might make one regret! Mr. Baring the Husband goes and comes to Parliament,—went yesterday, for instance, and is expected to dinner to-day;—I myself smoke a good deal of tobacco, and go stalking about among the green fields and lanes, which with their fresh breezes do my heart good; the two Dames, in the meanwhile, *daunnering** out and in among the flowerbeds mainly, *driving* out for what they call exercise once a day, and otherwise *consuming* the time: wholly an indolent affair, which I shall have had enough of to-morrow. —I think when one is not working, one ought not to be happy; one ought to be very unhappy, *seeking* out work.

. . . They are going to reprint my poor *French Revo-*

* Sauntering.

lution this year:* the *Miscellanies* are already reprinted (tho' not yet come out, owing to a trick of the Bookseller's): these poor Books of mine, in spite of all impediments, have become like a kind of *landed property* to me, and yield a certain *rent* more or less considerable, every year. Which is a good result of its kind. You can also tell James I have got an American Review of me, which seems worth sending to him: if I manage right, he will get it about the beginning of June.—. . .

Dear Sister, you see my paper is just ending; and indeed I feel that I might cover immensities of paper, in the vague hurried mood I am in, without telling you almost anything. Besides, here is a flunkey with brushed clothes, hot water, and hint that it is time to "dress for dinner":—sorrow on it!

Ever your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 175

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 30th June, 1847.

Dear Jean—There has just gone off for you a small Parcel of Books,—I should say for your *care*, as there are very few of them, and these very insignificant, that are for your behoof: it is, as usual, other people that are to profit by your position in the Carrier's *Town*. Some one or two, of very small size and moment, you will find inscribed to yourself or James; ditto to Jamie of Scotsbrig, either one or two ditto to Jenny: the essential body of the thing consists of two little Parcels, which you will find, addressed, one to a David Ferguson (a

* The third English edition.

poor little schoolmaster, an old schoolfellow of mine) at Annan; the other, still smaller, to Mrs. Johnstone of Grange (Waterbeck): poor David Ferguson's Book is an American copy of my *Cromwell*, which I wished the poor body to get, and comfort himself by; Mrs. Johnstone's is an American copy of *Heroes* and *Sartor*, all in one volume, not worth much if it be not as a memorial of me from old days to that worthy Lady. These two parcels (of Jamie's and Jenny's I need not speak) you are desired to forward swiftly, securely, and *to pay the carriage!* I have inclosed two dozen Postage Stamps for that latter object;—and so ends this mighty commission. I fancy the Parcel will be with you in about a week.—They are printing the *French Revolution* here again, that is the only news I have on such subjects. *The Miscellanies* have been lying in print (3rd Edition in 4 volumes), these many months; but the Booksellers, by a piece of *jockeyship* in the small way, have put me off a little: and indeed, it seems, "there never was such a year for Books as this, so utter a stagnation of all sale, for the last thirty years,"—the money market being so dreadfully "*tight!*" Enough of all that.

There came a Letter from Alick yesterday; which you will most likely see in a day or two, so soon as our Mother has done with it. All well in Alick's circle: a thing that amused me somewhat, was his *blasting* certain frightful old oak logs by gunpowder, and *so* making them removable! He has bought his new forty acres, I know not whether wisely or not; and Jack and I have sent him off the money to pay for them. For his own sake still more than for our own, I hope poor Alick will be able, as he evidently purposes, to pay it back again by and by.

Jack I found yesterday, on going to him about this matter, sitting in a linen coat, with bare neck, and in a slip-shod and rather *raised* *-looking condition; up to the chin among *Dante* Papers, which he is at last getting ready for a Book-seller, in hopes to be partially rid of them. That I think will be the chief advantage to him; but that, as matters go, will be considerable. Money, or other personal advantage, does not seem to lie in the enterprise. . . . Poor Doctor, I wish he were married (to a good wife); I wish at least he could get some fixed Residence for himself! I know no man who would have profited more, had a strict *commander* been appointed over him, twenty years ago, and continued severely active ever since.—Probably, I guess, he will return to Annandale before long; and stay there, doing out his *Dante*.

Our own movements lie utterly in the vague yet; never once turned over, or canvassed. I calculate loosely on a glimpse of Annandale and my dear old Mother again. . . . For the winter I sometimes even think of going over to Italy, Germany, etc., for a while. My "new Book" is as yet *deep*-buried; very deep under *rubbish*, dry and wet, wide as my existence, and too tedious to speak much of to you! I believe, however, there does, if I live, lie one other Book in me;—one knows not *what* lies in one; as my friend Oliver says, "we must serve our generation," do what *is* in us while Time lasts, "and then we shall *get to rest*."—

The other day, I had an interview with a Royal Highness, no less,—a foreign Royal Highness. The Duke of Weimar is here on a visit to the Queen;—a young man he, the *grandson* of Goethe's Duke. His Grand Duchess's *Secretary* (a curious

* Excited

little German Irish Scotchman*) brought a letter of introduction to me:—some intimation by him that a visit from me would be kindly taken by this high Dame, in her wing of the Palace: intimation politely *declined.* Then an express offer from the Grand Duke to come *hither;* which of course could not be declined. Accordingly the young Royalty, at an appointed hour (4 P. M., a day or two ago) came driving up, "in an open carriage, with two puce-coloured flunkeys," a whiskered chamberlain (Baron Something, a most awe-struck-looking man, "officially awe-struck"), and the little Scotch Irish Secretary. We managed altogether well, this young Royalty and I; bowed and complimented one another with both civility and sincerity; "glad to see the Grandson of Goethe's Friend and Protector"; showed him a Portrait † I had of this Elector "Frederick the Wise" (Luther's man at the Diet of Worms), which evidently pleased him much. "A bonny eagle-eyed lad," of some three-and-twenty; not at all without honest sense and faculty; straight as a rush; clear voice (something Scotch in the accent of him); and very much *the gentleman,* as one might expect. "Do not forget me," said he; "Come and see us yonder!" and so went his way. . . .

Your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

* Mr. Marshall.

† An engraving by Albert Dürer, presented to Carlyle by John Ruskin.

LETTER 176

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Chelsea, 3 July, 1847.

My dear Brother—. . . We were delighted to hear, dear Brother, of your wholesome industries; of your planting apple-trees, and other solid labours. By all means, complete your orchard; it is a beautiful duty that of planting fruit-trees; and a blessed one, especially when you can hope your Children will pluck the fruit! And get the *best* trees you can: that will prove to be the real thrift at last. And train the children, each in its own little garden, to respect fruit-trees, honourable profit, *industry*, *beauty* and *good-order:* it is the summary of all Gospels to man! I have bought three fruit-trees and put them into *this* poor sooty patch of Garden: the old ones, the work of some good man 150 years ago, having died or needed to be torn out: *one* pear and *one* cherry, for this year, seem to be *our* promise of fruit-harvest; but some poor hungry Cockney in another generation may do better.—Jane and I, for our share, were hugely amused at your application of *gunpowder* to the immovable oak logs! An excellent invention indeed. With a wimble you can sink the Physic into the very heart of them; and the most gnarled monster of a block will, with one roar, obey you, and go its ways, when the match-paper acts! I think they ought to make it general, that plan, in Canada woods. Only take care *to be well out of range*, when your shot goes off! This really is to be attended to; and I should be most afraid of you in that respect.

Your purchase of the forty acres was partly expected by us here. We cannot judge of the wisdom of it: but, as you did it with all your sagacity summoned to the enquiry, we cannot but hope it will do well. Nothing in the world seems more certain than that all Canada, and that Bield in particular, will and must increase yearly in value: whoever *can* stick to his place there, like a patient, valiant man, he *in*fallibly will find his place fruitful for him. May Bield and this new purchase, be blessed to our Brother and our Brother's heirs!—The instant your Letter came, Jack and I despatched the due order for eight hundred Dollars to Adamson at Dumfries; with injunction to be *swift*, that he might save the Post-steamer (of to-day). . . .

They are printing my *French Revolution* the third time, which brings me a little money. Of late years I get regularly a kind of *rent* from these poor Books of mine; some £200 or £300 a-year of late; which is almost affecting to me, for the "estate" lay long quite barren, and would pay nothing, not so much as a Canada bit of Forest. Courage always!

There are great fears entertained about the Potatoes this year; which I *hope* will be realized! Fever rages in Ireland, now that the famine has somewhat ceased: it is better to go *through* the horrible quagmire than to turn back into it.—Adieu, dear Alick: we send you our best Blessings, one and all of us, to you and yours.

Your affectionate Brother,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 177

To Dr. Carlyle, London.

Matlock Bath, 8 August, 1847.

My dear Brother—We [Wife and I] got along very happily on Friday, all the way, having nothing to complain of from men or machines or heavenly elements; about half-past three or four we were safe in Derby, worrying down a most hasty slice of roast-mutton and tough bread; after which a rapid whirl of some half-hour, or not much more, put us down at Ambergate (where we saw your friends the Limekilns with windowed chimneys to them); and then a heavy-laden omnibus took us upon its back or into its belly, and in about an hour and a half more, put us down at one of the Hotels, in this thrice and four-times world-celebrated Village of Matlock Bath. . . .

We left our trunks, etc., under care of the Hotel Boots, and proceeded straight in search of "private lodgings." . . .

Our accommodation is two upper rooms, or rather cells, to sleep in, and a first-floor room or cell to sit in; most infirm rustic apartments, but done up with a certain "elegance of poverty" that rather attracted us: rent including extras, 30/- per week! The poor people have a skill in charging rent, while their brief hour is! For a guinea we could have had prettier and larger rooms, but with less appearance of quiet, and with Landlordage of less promising physiognomy; and nowhere with so fine a view from the windows,—in that latter respect we stand unrivalled. As to household necessaries, Jane says they are a shade *dearer* than in London, and all procurable of moderate

quality. For a week we shall do tolerably well here; a kind of sleep-week, in which we are to forget all the world, and be forgotten by it,—not so much as a Letter possible here till Friday morning; and every day a day in which one can walk or sleep, and smoke or read or dream and dawdle at one's own sweet will.—I have had this morning a considerable walk before breakfast, down to Cromford, past Arkwright's place and his two Mills; one of them, the Cromford one if I mistake not, the *first* erected Mill in England, and consequently the Mother of all Mills. Near by it is Willersley "Castle" so-called: a solid sumptuous-looking free-stone Castle built by Arkwright, and now tenanted by his Grandson. The Mother of all Mills, I was sorry to hear, had lost most of its water, by new Mine-drainings in late years; and was very nearly fallen silent now, likely soon to go out altogether. I clomb also to the top of fine breezy hills, by narrow stony paths; but had to make haste home again, and found Jane walking on "Temple Terrace" here, waiting my return for breakfast.

I will not trouble you with much description; . . . Our Village again stands altogether on the *eastern* side of the river; stands, or rather *hangs;* for you never, in this country, saw human houses so situated; all stuck along the steep, connected by zigzag paths, shrouded in wood, overlooked they too, by bare cliffs;—at night with their lit windows you might think them Caves of the Troglodytes, by day they are as Bird-cages, each hung by its nail on the green wall. The only *platforms* of any extent (and they not of much) are occupied by the Hotels, three in number;—and a small patch of *Street,* for one little while, attaches itself to the carriage road, which runs close by the river, *hewn* out in many parts,—very far *below*

where I now write. Such is Matlock Bath; a place for lounging; and for bathing in these *luke*-warm Springs (properly *Tanks*, when you use them), not warmer I think than about 60° Fahrenheit; pale-greenish in colour, mawkish-insipid in taste, pleasant enough to swim in,—and according to my guess, probably not worth two-pence for any complaint in the Nosology, except as the imagination may be solaced by them a little. *Ohe, jam satis est!*

. . . Adieu dear Brother. Jane salutes you.

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 178

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Rawdon, near Leeds, 17 August, 1847.

Dear Jean—. . . Jane, I think, wrote to you from Matlock, how we were minded to have a look at the Peak Country of Derbyshire, and expected the Mr. Forster* of this place to join us in the expedition. Forster appeared duly on the Friday morning last; a most cheerful, honest, affectionate long-legged young man, of really sociable, intelligent and every way polite and agreeable habits;—whom I, glad to escape the task myself, instantly constituted Captain of the expedition: so *he* settled all bills and waiters and *etceteras*, engaged all carriages, and managed, so far as might be, the whole business; leaving me to my own reflexions, and my own tobacco; which was a mighty benefit indeed. The weather too, had suddenly dried up; and

* W. E. Forster, who became Member of Parliament, Under-Secretary for the Colonies, Chief-Secretary for Ireland, etc. He died in London, 5 April, 1886.

it kept dry and excellent just till we had done, and then began to rain again, which it has last night been vigorously doing: so that in all respects we were favourably circumstanced for our little expedition.

On Friday we went to a place called Dovedale, a little rocky valley on the River Dove,—infinitely celebrated by Tourists;—which we looked at, without much criticism, and not without a certain degree of pleasure, especially as the drive thither and back was all along thro' beautiful green hollows and airy limestone heights, with their queer clean old grey villages (all trimmed and cleaned to perfection), their solitary mine-heaps (of lead rubbish), sawmills (of Derbyshire stone), huge quarry-chasms, etc., etc. We got back again safe by nine o'clock to tea at Matlock (it is some 12 or 14 miles off); and next morning we quitted Matlock for good,—towards Buxton, which is another much more frequented watering-place, about 22 miles nearer you. Of Buxton I will tell you various things when we meet: it is a place all elegantly "for the occasion got up"; seemed likely to be wholesome, lying high up among bare green hills;—and must, I thought, be the chosen home of Donothing *Wearisomeness* for all the Northern Counties. We dined at their "public table," "saw the manners" (as Tommy Johnstone says); and came away heartily glad that we *had* seen it all, and needed not, without other errand, go again to see it. A most elegant, and I should imagine, most inexpressibly wearisome place!—Our next stage was to Tideswell (9 miles N. W. from Buxton), where I hoped to have found in the *Birth-Register* of the Parish the entry of "James Brindley in 1716" (the enormous Engineer Brindley, who made all the Canal-business in last century); but, after search, it was not there.

I am to write, and try elsewhere. —From Tideswell, north seven miles, is Castleton, a beautiful secluded old Village (1,000 years old or more) in the deep lap of the mountains; and close by is the most enormous Cavern in the world, called Peak Cavern now, but formerly the "Devil's i' Peak." A huge cave, runs 860 yards sloping down into the bowels of the mountain, has running waters, pools that you go over in a boat; now narrow-vaulted like a tunnel, then expanding into great expanses like cathedrals (some 700 and odd yards below ground): really a curious place this Devil's i' Peak, and seen without difficulty for a little money. Some rope-spinners have set up their wheels under the high-vaulted entrance, and spin there rent-free,—one of whom, an eminent Methodist, we heard preach in the Chapel afterwards; or rather praying it was, and very characteristic of its kind.

But in fine, dear Jean, to make my long tale short, know that we quitted Castleton and Derbyshire yesterday morning; came *spieling*,* in our own hired "clatch" (a kind of Double Gig, such as the place yielded) over the hills to Sheffield and Yorkshire; drove rapidly thro' Sheffield and its sooty flaming mills, and screeching Cutleries, to the railway station; and, just catching our train, were duly whirled away to Leeds (some 40 miles), and then with 7 miles more, in a "neat fly," were safely lodged here, about dusk, on our hospitable Hilltop far enough from all the smoke, in one of the most hospitable, pleasant and quiet mansions, I think, within the Four Seas. I have not slept in so utterly still a place these many years. Forster is off after breakfast to his business (Mill, Warehouse, etc.) at Bradford some 5 miles distant; and here Jane and I are left sover-

* Spieling, spinning along at a lively pace. Spiel also means climb.

eigns of the Mansion, with nothing in it but a quiet old Quaker Dame of a housekeeper, and some maids, etc., who seem all to be shod in felt, so still and noiseless are they, and look as clean as if they had just come out of Spring Wells. Really an excellent old House: it has belonged to some *Laird* in old days when *Lairds* still were; and Forster has thoroughly repaired and modernized it; and retires to this distance every afternoon, to be away from Bradford and its noise and reek, and sit silent or converse with quiet friends here. That is the end of our pilgrimage for the present; which surely has done very well hitherto. . . .

Your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

You can send my Mother the *Nation* too,—but not till James has quite done with it.

LETTER 179

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Rawdon, 29 August, 1847.

My dear Mother—Yesterday I sent a Newspaper, which would indicate to you that we are still here and well. Jenny's Letter came duly, with the welcome tidings, which we hope still holds good, that you were in your usual way again. We are very quiet here; in a green wholesome country, among good friendly people who seem to enjoy our stay: we must not now linger very long; but are, were it only from natural laziness, somewhat averse to pack and take the road again!

. . . You would read about that frightful murder in Paris?* It excells in atrocity and infernal quality all that we

* Of the Duchesse de Praslin.

have heard of for a long while. France, especially in the upper classes of it, is said by every body to be in a shocking state of unprincipled depravity; and new commotions are expected in it very confidently when once Louis Philippe has ended his cunning work in this world. The Lady was in London some years ago, when her Father was Ambassador, and many persons knew her there.

We have been very quiet and quite stationary here; except that last week I rode away some 20 miles to see a Mr. Milnes* (with whom you remember I once made a visit, several years ago, in these parts): Milnes met me on the road (Jane would not go with me, preferring repose): I had a pleasant afternoon and night among the Milnes people; came home next day; and then the *next*, Milnes came up hither, and staid all night with us:—it would have been extremely pleasant, and indeed was so; only I lost a good deal of sleep, and got, as I usually do in such cases, a decided *indigestion*, with headache, etc., by the job! "Quietness is best," —decidedly it is.

. . . "What day wilt thou come, then?" that is the question! Dear Mother, I do not yet know; but it will not be long;—and, in fact, if I could get *smuggled* away, and carried off in my *sleep*, I believe I should vote for its being very soon; this night perhaps! Jane, as I said, decides to turn *South* again, when I go off: this also rather detains me, for she seems to get on well here, and to have improved considerably since we left home. . . .

Adieu, dear Mother,

Ever your Son

Tom.

* The late Lord Houghton.

LETTER 180

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Rawdon, 3rd September, 1847.

My dear Brother—. . . Jane seemed considerably worn out with the heats of London, and I considered it would do her good to get into the silence of the fields for a while. As it accordingly has proved; for I find her much amended at present, and indeed fully in her average state of health. We have had beautiful weather, and no evil accident at all has befallen us. It was from the first settled that I was to go on to Annandale; Jane too was eagerly invited, and at one time seemed to have thoughts of it; but she cannot yet resolve to revisit Scotland after her great losses there: so she turns homewards for Chelsea again, on the day when I set off for Manchester and Annandale. That is to be the day after to-morrow, as we at present calculate; which in part accounts for my hurry at present. Early next week, probably on Monday (it may even be *this* week and on Saturday, if I find nobody that I like in Manchester), I expect to be in poor old Annandale again, and to see our dear old Mother once more. It is a sight for which one ought to thank Heaven, surely with one's whole soul: and yet to me it is always full of sorrow; and when the time comes to part again, it quite tears me to pieces for the moment, so that I could almost repent ever having come. O surely there *is* some kind of higher reunion appointed for poor wretches who have honestly loved one another here, and yet could never much help one another, but had all to admit many times that

their hearts were sore, and could only share their *sorrows* together! God made us all; God will provide what is *good* for us all, what is best for us all.—But I may well change this strain.

We got your Letter here just three days ago: . . . I sent it to Jack, with charge to forward it from Chelsea; the small scraping of an *answer*, which he has sent in return, I also enclose here.

He agrees with me in regret that you have not got the bit of land after all! There was of course no help; land with a doubtful *title*, paid for by very indubitable money, would never have done. . . . As to the money, Jack agrees with me that there is no hurry at all about returning it hither; that if you can get it well *invested* (I mean *safely* first, all things are subordinate to that), it may lie there, bearing its bit of interest, till we see. As to remitting it in *corn* or flour, that, as Jack says, will be a terribly unsafe operation just now! Our corn-merchants, who have flourished like the green bay-tree during last year of dearth, are now falling like the leaves in November: never such a time of "corn failures,"—amounting already to five millions of bankruptcy, some say! We have an excellent harvest here, all over Europe indeed, and are getting it some weeks earlier than was at one time expected. Do not invest money in *corn* therefore. Put it by as we said, in some safe place; and let us wait till we see. . . .

Your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 181

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Scotsbrig, 2 October, 1847.

My dear Brother—. . . Our dear old Mother is very well here; considering her age, fully as well as I could expect to see her. Her hand shakes a *little* worse than when you saw her; otherwise there is little perceptible change. She is much delighted to learn of your welfare, to see that you are "getting more content in your new place," as she expresses it: and, I think, of all the news you have ever sent, there is none that gratifies her more than this of the "Secession-Church Minister" whom you are about getting. Good old Mother! She is even now sitting at my back, trying at another table to write you a small word with her own hand; the first time she has tried such a thing for a year past. It is Saturday night, after dark; we are in the East Room, in a hard dry evening, with a bright fire to ourselves two; Jenny and her Bairns are "scouring up things" in the other end of the house; and below stairs the winter operations of the farm go on, in a subdued tone: you can conceive the scene!—Jamie has got all his crops in, and indeed the harvest is quite over, a fortnight ago, on all hands of us; . . . We have got a new railway here, actually running from Beattock to Carlisle, for some weeks past, heard squealing by all of us many times a day, visible from Mother's end window about the Broadlea and partially from Kirtlebrig all the way to near Land. . . .

Dear Brother, I certainly think you will be very wise to

get that *frame barn* you speak of: it must be an almost indispensable convenience, if you do not thatch your stacks. Make *an effort* for it; and if you cannot manage it, take some of that money * to help you.—.

Ever yours,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 182

To Alexr. Ireland, Manchester.

Chelsea, 15 Octr., 1847.

My dear Sir—By a Letter I had lately from Emerson,—which had lain, lost and never missed, for above a month in the treacherous Post-office of Buxton, where it was called for, and denied,—I learn that Emerson intended to sail for this country "about the first of October"; and infer therefore that probably even now he is near Liverpool or some other of our Ports. Treadmill, or other as emphatic admonition, to that scandalous Postmaster of Buxton! He has put me in extreme risk of doing one of the most unfriendly and every way unpardonable-looking things a man could do!

Not knowing in the least to what Port Emerson is tending, where he is expected, or what his first engagements are, I find no way of making my word audible to him in time; except that of entrusting it, with solemn charges to you,—as here. Pray do me the favour to contrive in some sure way that Emerson may get hold of that Note † the instant he lands in England. I shall be permanently grieved otherwise; shall have failed in a clear duty (were it nothing more), which will never probably

* See *ante*, p. 35.

† Printed in *Carlyle-Emerson Correspondence* as Letter CXI.

in my life offer itself again. Do not neglect I beg very much of you. And, on the whole, if you can, get Emerson put safe into the Express Train, and shot up hither, as the first road he goes! That is the result we aim at. But the Note itself, at all events; I pray you get that delivered duly, and so do me a very great favour for which I depend on you.

It is only two days since I got home,—through Keswick and the Lake Country;—nor has my head yet fairly settled from the whirl of so many objects, and such rapid whirls of locomotion outward and inward, as the late weeks have exposed me to. To-day therefore I restrict myself to the indispensable, and will add nothing more.

Kind regards to Ballantyne and Espinasse.—Hope your School Society prospers? Glad shall I be to learn that your Scheme, or any rational or even semi-rational Scheme for that most urgently needful object, promises to take effect among those dusky populations! Of your Program, as probably I mentioned, there remains with me no copy now.

Yours very truly,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 183

To John Forster, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Chelsea, 18 November, 1847.

Dear Forster— . . . The essential objection [to Forster's Life of *Goldsmith,* which Carlyle praises highly], I fancy is, that you had not a better hero than poor Goldy; that you had not a higher virtue than good-nature, good-humour, and a certain Irish "keep never minding," to celebrate and deify!

Certainly poor Goldy is but a weak wire to string his century upon, —poor fellow, his contribution to it, that of painting one or two small Pictures *de genre* in a happy manner, which still hang pleasantly on our walls, was essentially not a great one. He built nothing, pulled down nothing; changed nothing in any way for the better; merely painted his dainty little *tableaux de genre*, under thriftless, imprudent insolvent circumstances; and generously left them to us, and went his unknown way. Poor Goldy—and yet you may say justly, what help? I could get no *better* hero in that century; no other that would suit my purpose! True enough, the blame is not essentially yours; —and it is beautiful withal to see, as you show us, how one of Nature's own Gentlemen may live, and do some kind of work that is worthy of him, under the husk of a poor ragged Irish slave (for such poor Goldy was); which also is a kind of Gospel! All this is "true for you": and yet I say, mind the *per contra* of it too, which is here urged; and take care of your Fourth and concluding Part;—and get done with it, and send me a copy!

More power to your elbow!

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 184

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 1 December, 1847.

Dear Sister— . . . There is just coming out a new Edition of the *French Revolution* too; but I think you are all supplied with that. This contains nothing new except an *Index*, and I suppose it is better printed than any of the others. I have a copy or two to dispose of, if anybody specially requires

them, but I keep them lying here, as there is no hurry. —The slow Bookseller has never yet called to pay me for these two Books; but he will have to do it, for all the "pressure" of the money-market he complains of! There is also to be an Edition of poor *Sartor* again, before long. It seems very strange, and is indeed almost *pathetic* to me, that these poor bits of Books should still be read, and now yield some "meat, clothes and fire" to me: but so it is, and I ought to be silent and thankful. They were written in sore tribulation; the children, as it were, of mere sorrow and tears: but it is best if one can get one's weeping over, if one has to weep, at the *beginning* than at the end of the account!

. . . We are tolerably well in health here; Jane herself, tho' a day of frost incommodes her, has a good average of health; but her spirits are none of the best, in the dark months especially. I sit secluded up here, among Books and Papers, all forenoon; keep for most part very solitary, and *try* to advance towards something worthy—at lowest, contrive generally to "consume my own smoke," which is something!—In this Number of *Fraser's Magazine* is a small Paper* of mine with some Letters of Cromwell; which you will rather like to read. My Mother has a copy (of the Article by itself), if you see it nowhere else. . . .

God bless you, dear Jean, you and yours.

Affectionately always,

T. CARLYLE.

* *Squire Papers.* For a very interesting article on this subject, by Prof. W. Aldis Wright, see "The English Historical Review," No. 2, April, 1886.

LETTER 185

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 25 December, 1847.

My Dear Jean— . . . We are in fair health here; wonderful, considering the general average. Jane is a little shivery when the cold winds begin; but she never fairly gives in, and indeed, I think, is in fair case. We are all, we London people, in the very heart of Christmas goose-eating; you in Scotland never dreamt of such a time as the London Christmas is: huge *walls* of slain sheep and beeves; all railroads groaning with fat turkeys, capons, hares; the whole world intent seemingly on one thing, that of being filled with excellent victual and liquor. With all which, however, there are *two* "London people," a dyspeptic two, that do not in the least concern themselves; these two are to dine, this Christmas day, upon I know not what,—perhaps *nothing*, except some small pudding of ground-rice or the like! The dark weather and the turn of the year make me always *serious*, if nothing else would; and I never could *rejoice* very heartily at Newyearsday, not when I was much younger and merrier than now.—We have got to decide, in these days about going down into Hampshire again, where the people want a new visit from us. *Grand* enough people, and very kind, both the elder Ashburton Lordship and the younger; they want us "from the 7th of January to the 15th of February,"—which, in so idle an element, seems much too long a time. Nay, there is one of us that would almost as soon be off altogether,—so perverse is the matter with its fashionable

idlenesses, its etc., etc.! But I suppose we shall have to go, for a shorter or a longer time: kind souls, of any rank, especially of that rank, ought to have their kindness recognised, by the like of us.*

No *work* is yet lying *disengaged* on the *stithy*, with a hammer in one's hand freely smiting at it! Work, I do imagine, goes on; but, alas, I think it may be a long while yet before much of it get fairly to the *stithy*,—for the nature of it is a little abstruse. Nothing hurries me from without; nothing. I have grown absolutely to care not one penny about all the "fame," etc., etc., that such a generation as the present could give me or withhold from me,—indeed, from any generation of Adam's Posterity, it seems a mighty small matter to me;—and for the rest, I have money to buy meal and broadcloth with; and I do not know what else particularly "the world" has in it that could be superlatively useful to me! Really one feels, with one's head grey, and one's heart long tempered in the Stygian waters, very *independent* indeed; and quite as a kind of secret *emperor* among these beggarly populations, all hunting like ravens, all hungry as ravens, tho' with heaps of ill-smelling carrion already piled round them!—So let us be quiet;—let us be pious-minded, and listen to the Silences, to the "small still Voices," ourselves silent.—

I know not if you read that Paper in *Fraser;* or have heard that there is a kind of audible bustle about it, in the *Athenæum* and other such barren regions here; many long-eared persons insinuating, or saying openly, that I have been *hoaxed* in the matter. To all which I answer, nothing:—only, if it go too far,

* Mrs. Carlyle fell ill and was unable to go to Bay House, on this occasion.

I think of sending my "unknown Correspondent" * *in person* up to the people (who is a terrible tower of a fellow, true as heart-of-oak, and half-mad); he, stamping a huge cudgel on the floor, might chance to settle the "hoax"-argument in a very sudden and unexpected manner!—. . .

LETTER 186

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, Saturday, 26 February, 1848.

My dear Mother— . . . To-day I have a pretty *gouster* of Southwest wind and rain going on against my windows here, which it hits very fair, and with a sound really musical to me, there being snug fire, and no smoke but that of *tobacco*, in the inside of the glass for me!—Such weather is not the best for invalids; nevertheless we are getting or got well; Jane herself evidently improving, and able now to venture out for a short walk whenever the sun shines kindly. She otherwise altogether keeps the house. I for my own share am in my usual way again,—and indeed, for one thing, have been *sleeping* a good deal more during the last month than is usual with me. Jack, a busy man, and very cheerful, is in fine health, so far as we see or understand. He was here last night,—full of talk about the French riots and what not. A strange business that of the French and their riots just now! To-day I send you another *Times*, which carries the business a bit further; nay, yesterday there arrived a telegraphic express here, which is doubtless at Dumfries too by this time, That Louis Philippe

* Squire who supplied Carlyle with copies of the Cromwell Letters. See *ante*, p. 53, n.

was *deposed*, and his little infant grandson ("Comte of Paris" so-called) appointed "King" in his stead, with a body of the hottest Radicals and Republicans for "Ministry" round him;—and in brief that Louis Philippe and his Queen, etc., etc., were fairly on their travels, and had quitted Paris for good! This was the news last night; which of course will make a great noise, whatever quarter of the world it reaches. Poor old Louis Philippe! An old man now, and has not learned to be an honest man;—he learns, or may learn, that the cunningest knavery will not serve one's turn either. I begin to be really sorry for him, poor old scoundrel; he has had much sorrow, toil and tribulation, all the way, these 74 years, as he came along hither; and *possesses*, as it were, nothing at all at this time except physical food and clothes.—Guizot, his minister, is much more despicable: a poor honourable Writer and teacher of the Public at one time; him, for a mess of pottage, they seduced from his honourable garret, and converted into a rich conspicuous Public Quack,—and now his light is quite snuffed out, and even his life (I fancy) is exposed to risk. His Father died by the guillotine, an honest Protestant man; his old Mother (whom Thomas Erskine, etc., used to know), I hope is dead too,—for this sight would be too hard for her!—

Of late days I have begun to scribble a little,—or rather to *try* if I can scribble, and convince myself that I *cannot!* For that is about the whole length it has got to yet. No man ever found his *hand* more entirely *out* than I now do;—which is very sorrowful; but only to be *mended* by holding on.—My dear Mother, take care of yourself in this wild time! I hope Jenny keeps you very *quiet*, and tries (as I know she will) to screen you well from all disturbance. Do you get right sleep? Too

much walking, or too much talking either, will do you no good.—Let somebody write to us very soon again; from us you shall hear directly. All blessings on you all.

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 187

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 26 March, 1848.

Dear Jean— . . . Here is a Bank Cheque for £10, for which James will get payment: deducting his own account £1 9 0, there remains £8 11 0, which I commission him to hand to my Mother, to "help to buy the Gig," or do what she likes with. . . .

I have got a *Times* now, too, for myself; the world's history is getting into such a *gallop* everywhere, one can hardly keep pace with it. Jack and I have also got a *French* Newspaper (*Le National*) between us, daily; but that, I rather think, will have to be renounced, as more than I can get read. I am also thinking seriously of some kind of Book,—poor wretch!—but the times with me too are not without their difficulties!—

On Thursday I had again an eight-o'-clock *dinner* to execute at the Barings', on occasion of Emerson,—or rather Emerson was but the excuse of it, for he kept very quiet; mild modest eyes, lips sealed together like a pair of pincers, and nobody minded him much: we had quantities of Lords, Townwits (Thackeray, etc.), beautiful Ladies;—and I, as usual, got a most sick head and heart by it: not likely to recover for two days yet. One of the Ladies there, a beauty declared, Lady Castlereagh whom I had seen once before,—sends down a flunkey

yesternight to ask me to another such ploy to her own mansion: Oh Heavens, no! I answered; there is nothing but mischief, and indigestion with headaches, in all that for me! . . .

LETTER 188

To John Forster, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Chelsea, Wednesday [Spring, 1848].

Dear Forster— . . . Froude's Book [*Nemesis of Faith*] is not,—except for wretched people, strangling in white neck-cloth, and Semitic thrums,—worth its paper and ink. What on earth is the use of a wretched mortal's vomiting up all his interior crudities, dubitations, and spiritual, agonising belly-aches, into the view of the public, and howling tragically, "See!" Let him in the Devil's name, pass them, by the downward or other method, . . . and say nothing whatever! Epictetus's sheep *intending* at least to grow good wool, was a gentleman in comparison. . . .

LETTER 189

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Chelsea, 16 June, 1848.

My dear Brother— . . . We are in our usual poorish way of health here, which does not grow very brilliant in spite of the good weather: however, we still stir about in a grumbling way, and even Jane is pretty well on foot at present. Jack sticks obstinately to his task and it proves very *dreich* [tedious] to get done: but I believe it will be really *well* done at last, and

prove a useful thing.—I myself am beginning to write again,—for the wild revolutionary times urge me on;—but I do not get much under way yet; and indeed am much at a loss what form to throw the thing into: but I must *bore* along, "stogging" and "blinking" (as you once defined Corson's ploughing); and nothing but persistence will find me out the right method. I once thought of writing a long set of *Articles* for Newspapers, of which two samples I think were sent to you of late; but the thing does not well take that shape; and in fact I know not *what* to do with it, but shall gradually know.

I suppose you hear enough about our Chartists; and how the French, and indeed all Nations, are puddling deep in the quagmire of Revolution and social distress: the Chartists do us next to no mischief here as yet (to us here at Chelsea, none at all); but the look of that concern is very ominous too, and I believe there are great miseries and confusions at no great distance for Britain generally, and bad days are coming, and must come before many years go! We cannot help it; I cannot:—nor do I see any hope of real remedy till long *after* our poor fight will have altogether ended, and that of our sons and grandsons perhaps too!—Much terrible distress prevails just now in the manufacturing regions; and the Irish people have got again into a large potato-crop this year, with which, if it fail, they will be in a bad way!—On the whole, I cannot but think you lucky, dear Brother, in spite of all your trials and sorrows, that you have got your family into a hopefuller land than this, and have a piece of soil of your own to till, and little else but Heaven to be responsible to. God keep you in *His* ways always, and so *all* will be well!—

A Captain Sterling here (John's Brother, the writer's whom

you know of) gave us a large map of Upper Canada, which he made while soldiering there. Here is the reduced copy of a scrap of it round Brantford; I want you to put down the exact situation of *Bield*, and send it back to me that we may know.—If ever there come anybody that could take a Sketch of the House, etc.—But that alas, is not at all likely. . . .

Your ever affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 190

To the Rev. Alexander Scott, Regent's Park, London.

Chelsea, 5th August, 1848.

Dear Scott—A practical, humane, and very intelligent Country Gentleman, a Mr. Spedding * of the Cumberland region, transmits me the enclosed excerpt from the *Times*,† with eager desire to have some farther light in regard to it,—some account of the *success* of the project there indicated. The principal question would be, Do the *Ouvriers* actually earn their franc and half daily, under these conditions, or are they merely *paid* so much daily, and made very miserable in the process? If the former should turn out to be the answer, it would be a great fact for Spedding, and for me, who am continually preaching that method of proceeding with our own Paupers, as the real point

* Thomas, the elder brother of James Spedding.

† "Letters from Orleans of the 20th state that several thousands of the operatives employed in the national workshops of Paris have been sent into La Saloyne, where they can be employed advantageously in reclaiming the waste lands in that district. It is believed that 50,000 men can earn one franc fifty centimes (1/3) daily, and add considerably to the wealth of the nation. A severe military discipline has been established among those men by the Government Engineers under whose direction they are placed."

at which to begin the "Organization of Labour" here at home. I should like very well to know.

As there is nobody in France of whom I could conveniently ask the question, and I am somewhat at a loss how to proceed, it strikes me that there is perhaps possibility of getting an answer through some of your Parisian connexions, which are of a more recent date than mine. I beg you to make inquiry if you can, and let me know the result. If you cannot, the question must lie in abeyance for the present. . . .

Yours, ever truly,

T. CARLYLE.

If you see M. Chopin,* pray offer him my hearty regards. I hope we shall get some language to speak in by and by, and then get into more plentiful communication. An excellent, gentle, much-suffering human soul, as I can at once see without language.

LETTER 191

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 14 August, 1848.

Dear Brother— . . . What you said of the poor bodies "wheeling their coals" at Ecclefechan was sad enough to me; hopeful however, that the error, as would appear, is still remediable! Certainly I will subscribe to help the poor bodies, put down your name and my own for whatever sum you find to be suitable, the same for each. And here you perceive, is a most *handfast* statement of the case, drawn up by me to-day;

* Frédéric Chopin, the well-known composer and pianist. He suffered long from consumption, and died in Oct., 1849.

which I hope may do some good when presented! You can read it as it passes;—it will only cost a day's detention, and one penny stamp:—if there be any *error* committed by me of sufficient importance, I wish you would yourself take some opportunity (straightway) of rectifying it with C. Stewart himself; but I do not think there is. . . .

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 192

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 26 Aug., 1848.

My dear Brother— . . . Laurence did not succeed with my portrait; after four laborious sittings, he yesterday decided to abandon it, and to resume another (laid by formerly) which *another* sitting now will rid me of! Poor Laurence works terribly; but a vein of ineffectuality, a trying to do the *impossible*, is apt to run through his enterprises. For the rest, these sittings do me little or no mischief at present; he lets me even *smoke* while he paints; I have a good walk to and from, and my day otherwise, I am sorry to say, is still very much of an *idle* one. In fact, I still sit upon the brink here, and feel loth and uncertain about plunging in. Things, one may hope, *will* ripen with me; alas, I feel I shall have to be miserable again before they do! For the present, I sit in the utmost attainable silence; alone with my own thoughts and remembrances great part of every day, and certainly in as secluded a scene as the Autumn could well offer me anywhere. Till after that visit to the Grange, which is to begin about the 1st of September (day

not yet fixed), I feel there will nothing be done, but at best a little reading. The weather too, continues moist and cool; far from unpleasant to me, if it were not so unpromising to others.—Little Jeannie* enjoys herself very well here, and seems to be as cheery a little creature as ever, able to do well and employ herself on nothing here as well as elsewhere.

On Thursday last Forster† gave us (*her* at least) an invaluable treat: an opera box namely, to hear Jenny Lind sing farewell. Illustrious indeed. We dined with Fuz† at five, the hospitablest of men; at eight, found the Temple of the Muses all a-shine for Lind and Co.,—the piece, *La Somnambula*, a chosen bit of nonsense from beginning to end,—and, I suppose, an audience of some three thousand *expensive*-looking fools male and female come to see this Swedish Nightingale "hop the twig," as I phrased it. Nothing could exceed my ennui; especially as we staid till the very finish, little Jeannie being quite delighted. Lind seemed to me a very true, clear, genuine little creature, with a voice of extraordinary *extent* and *little* richness of tone; who sang, acted, etc., with consummate fidelity,—but had unfortunately nothing but mere *non*-sense to sing or act; a defect not much felt by the audience, as would appear, but very heavily pressing upon me for one. "Depend upon it," said I to Fuz, "the Devil is busy *here* to-night, wherever he may be idle!"—Old Wellington had come staggering in to attend the thing. Thackeray was there; d'Orsay, Lady Blessington,—to all of whom (Wellington excepted!) I had to be presented and grin some kind of foolery,—much against the grain. It was one o'clock when we got home; on the whole, I do not de-

* Jeannie Welsh, Mrs. Carlyle's cousin.
† John Forster.

sign to hear Lind again; it would not bring me sixpence worth of benefit, I think to hear her sing six months in that kind of material!* Ah, me; the Sons of Adam are a strange fraternity! —We are next to go and dine with Thackeray, who has been at Spa and back again; not a lovely outlook either. Yesternight Lewes and his Wife came in: spite of the "emptiness" of London, there is still company enough and to spare, as would seem, —if it were worth anything! . . .

LETTER 193

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

The Grange, 19 September, 1848.

My dear Brother—. . . . There is something very interesting to me in the history of these poor Miss Littles; † elderly maidens whom I can look back upon as rosy children of my own size. It is literally true that I have "paidled in the burn" with them: such scenes are distinctly present in my memory at this moment. When you next call at Cressfield, offer my kind regards to the two good ladies, and say it is impossible I can ever forget *them* in this world!—I am glad also to hear of Hunter's

* Carlyle had met this renowned songstress about a year before this date. In a letter to Mrs. Aitken (9 July, 1847) he says: "All people are rushing after a little Swedish woman, an Opera Singer, called Jenny Lind: £40 is the price of a box (four sittings) for one night, in some cases! I saw Jenny, one day, dined with her, and had to speak French to her all dinner,—a nice little, innocent, clear, *thin* 'bit lassie'; somewhat like a douce minister's daughter; sense enough too; but my notion was that I could easily raise fifty women with much *more* sense (one in Dumfries with twice as much perhaps); and that, as to singing, with such a *shrew* of a voice,—I would *not* give £10 or hardly 10 pence, to hear Jenny!"

† Of Cressfield, Ecclefechan, where Dr. Carlyle and his mother had lately been calling.

visit. I hope you and he are managing to do poor Miss Grahame some benefit.

At the Grange here our weather and all outward equipments continue good; but the *inner man* (in one of our cases at least) begins to get decidedly a little weary of the affair! I hear nothing of its ending, however;—for the people, as you may conjecture, *live* by company; as poor people with 40 or 50 thousand a-year are obliged to do in this country: with *them*, I suppose, the matter need not end for weeks and weeks yet. But on my own side,—especially unless I get to sleep a little better,—I believe it cannot hold out very long! Jane, who seems to like it, and does better with it than I, may continue after me till she has had enough. . . .

"Making of wits" is, as you say, a wretched trade; and except the Lady A.* herself and Charles Buller, none here do it, even it, tolerably well: *ach Gott!* I defend myself against the twaddle-deluge, as I can; sometimes break in with some fierce *realism*, condemnatory of the whole business, which seems to *amuse* them more than anything!—. . .

LETTER 194

To Mrs. Aitken, at the Gill, Annan.

Chelsea, 28 December, 1848.

Dear Jean— . . . We are very glad indeed to learn by your last letter, and by Aird's and the other Newspaper reports, that the Pest † seems fast abating in Dumfries.

* Lady Ashburton (late Lady Harriet Baring). The first Lord Ashburton having died in May last, his son Mr. Baring succeeded to the title.

† Cholera.

. . . If the Dumfries people, therefore, will effectually sweep and wash their dirty closes and recesses, and keep them effectually washed; and get clear running water (which surely is abundant in that region), and *drain* themselves; and, in short, try in all ways to *do* what the everlasting Law of Things, very clearly revealed by "Common Sense," in regard to such affairs, prescribes to all creatures,—they may reap some fruit from this heavy visitation, and perhaps avoid the like in future.

. . . Jack as you know, has at length got out his Book; an immense affair for him, poor fellow. I have read it carefully over; and find it most faithfully executed in every fibre of it,—a bit of genuinely honest labour, creditable to the house, and to the man. It is perfectly certain to sell either slower or faster, and will long be regarded as a truly useful Book by the small but *perpetual* public that studies *Dante.*—Your tidings of our dear and brave old Mother were, as you may fancy, precious to us. . . .

LETTER 195

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 21 April, 1849.

My dear Sister—I have been very remiss in writing; and have true reason for remorse, now when I see what apprehensions my delay has given rise to! "Offence?" O Heaven, not at all, at all: you never gave me any "offence"; quite the *reverse* was what poor *Crow** always gave me, since her first appearance in this world,—a sunny Sunday which I still recollect

* Nickname for Carlyle's sister Jean, "the black haired," who was born on Sunday, 2nd September, 1810.

very well! Never dream of such a thing as that. But the fact is, I had somehow passed my tide in this matter; and tho' frequently reminding myself of it, I fancied you yourself would perhaps write first, or that perhaps, etc., etc.,—in short the thing was put off from day to day; and *this* is the first day on which so simple a thing is actually done. After all, I believe it was *your* blame principally, Missus. Did I not send a *Westminster Review* by post, while you were at Gill, just before quitting it, I think? In that *Westminster Review* were two pages (about poor Charles Buller),* on the margin of which I had marked that you were to cut them out and send them to me, as I had no other copy: you never sent them;—you never read the Review at all, that is the fact! It was addressed to James; it could not, I think, fail to arrive? I put it into the Post-office myself. *That* is the *prime* origin of all these dim delays! Which now have at last happily ended.

. . . Did they send you from Scotsbrig a Newspaper† with an Article of mine in it, this week? A fierce Article on Ireland; fiercely demanding that Peel should have a fly at it,—that at least Lord John [Russell] and his "waik squad" should give it up forever! This is the only word I have uttered for a long while: a word prompted by real *conscience* on my part; and to which, I see, the world is really like responding a little. Russell, it is conjectured everywhere, has got upon the *slide;* all creatures are called to *soap* the course for him, and get him down and out of sight *as* soon as the Fates permit!—I really ought to stick to my paper; and work away till I get *heated:*

* Who had died on 29th November, 1848.

† The *Spectator*, of 14th April. The article was entitled "Ireland and Sir Robert Peel."

part of my big monstrous meaning, which everybody would be apt to shriek over, might then perhaps be got uttered soon! —

. . . God bless you all, dear Jean!

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 196

To Dr. Carlyle, Newstead (Mr. Neuberg's), Nottingham.

Chelsea, 8 June, 1849.

My dear Brother— . . . I have continued my Irish studies, in the same obstructed fashion as before you went; have got my map, especially, from the Binder; and feel myself slowly gathering some glimmerings of intelligence and interest about that unfortunate Island. My purpose to proceed thither still holds, tho' not yet in a quite definite condition: Forster* now cannot *go* with me, will *join* me, etc., (which will not suit half as well); I think of going direct by steamer from this port to Dublin,—next "Thursday at 10 A. M.," or Thursday come a week? The latter is the more probable of the two. Nay, Aubrey de Vere writes to me to-day that I ought to *wait* till the cholera have abated, for in some of the most interesting districts that is very prevalent just now. I think of Duffy† for a first companion;—to him I must write a Note, had I done with this presently on hand. The best advice I expect to get to-morrow from Twisleton, who is appointed for that purpose: he came here, one day since you went; we talked of many things, but postponed our Tour speculation till "Sunday at two o'clock." Alas, my *appetite* for travel, or for any earthly en-

* W. E. Forster.

† Sir C. Gavan Duffy, who died, February, 1903.

terprise or work, is close upon zero, or altogether zero, at this moment! However, I must *not* leave it there; I feel withal that I ought to go and that I must go. God help me! *Amen;* let all the friends that I have say, *Amen.*

Twisleton seems to me, as he has long done, a particularly honest, faithful and worthy man. One of the things he spoke of was your *Dante;* inquiring if that Carlyle was "my Cousin"; testifying further, with heartfelt emphasis, to the solid value and honourable completeness of that work; in which sentiment I could not but agree with him. More genuine praise I think I have not heard you get, than from this rather inarticulate man: "Hm-m-m, very well done, hm-m-, excellent *style* of doing the work, m-m-m, brings Dante home to you, mhm-m-m!" etc., etc.

The Painter who is doing me in miniature is one Carrick; a dexterous ingenious veracious-looking little body; sent hither by Frewen (one of my Cromwell correspondents), or rather, I should say, admitted by Frewen's means, for he is painting with an eye to engravers, I believe, and eagerly picks up all the faces that promise to avail in that direction. Jane encourages; says he will evidently succeed. He comes down *hither*, every morning; wearies me, I must say, very much. He is from Carlisle City; and was a chemist once: more like poor Badams than anybody I have seen.

Forster will be ready for you on Monday, as probably you know before. I want much to hear from Scotsbrig; fear that this headache will not let me write thither to-day. . . .

LETTER 197*

To His Wife, Chelsea.

Kilkenny, 11 July (Wednesday), 1849.

"All well, sleep hardly to be had": that is still the bulletin, and so in great hurry before 11 o'clock come, when this City and Castle are to be *done*, I must send you a word, you still safe at Neuberg's I hope, and only meditating still to go ahead. Oh what a life, oh what a life! But we shall get through it and have much to tell when we meet.

That Monday morning at 8.30, Fitz † and I set out on our Car; went whirling towards the Wicklow Hills very prosperously for some ten miles, I with plenty of tobacco, and almost nothing to talk (having got *dos-à-dos*, cunningly on the opposite side of the Car, and only talking to the driver, a very hardy intelligent little fellow, worth talking to): for ten miles or more; but after that we got a new driver, new horse *that wouldn't go*, and had adventures enough! At 12.30 however, we, walking and otherwise, were fairly in the Pass of "Wicklow Gap," a wild scene of bleak, stony, boggy, mountains (altogether like Galloway and the land beyond Puttock, very interesting to me); full of scarecrow *sagtails* ‡ all in grey rags, busily looking after

*The MSS. of this letter and of three others from Carlyle to his wife, were sent to my late wife, by the Right Hon. W. E. Forster, in 1882. He had found them exhibited for sale in the shop of an autograph dealer; they having been, along with other MSS. (the Tour in Ireland, many of Emerson's letters to Carlyle, etc., etc.) carried away from Cheyne Row without Carlyle's consent or knowledge.

† Peter FitzGerald.

‡ Down-pressed spiritless creatures.

their *peats*. Conversed with wandering herdsmen, etc., looked with wonder upon the aspect of all. Thro' Wicklow Gap, in wild stony country, lead-mines and a little more of substance in men's existence (tho' not much) begin to show themselves. Finally at 1.30 in a kind of narrow, long Pit, with two lakes (*loughs*) in it, among the Hills, appears the scene of the St. Kevin's hermitages and world-old devotional exercises, and as memorial of him, *Seven* Churches, ruinous all, gone to the foundation some of them, which ancient Irish piety had set up to pray in, for that is what it amounts to now. Old damp mouldering ruins, made of granite flag-stones, the arched roof of one of them still standing; girt with thistly rubbish, graves (still new graves), and eternal silence of the mountains and their melancholy water-pools: seven Churches, all huddled into one close space—I can only fancy the ancient Irish thought they would get to heaven by being buried here. No more tragic scene of ragged pathos, and inexorable pious-impious desolation ever struck me in this world. For, alas, the eternal "silence" *was* broken by one sound, and only one—that of tattered wretchedness in every figure howling on the right and the left, "*Lave* a penny for the love of God!"—Coming back thro' Wicklow Gap in the grey dusk, a man galloping down hill met us,—galloping for surgeon and priest: a miner was *killed*, but whether *dead* or only "kilt entirely" one could not learn. The howl of a woman from the opposite flank of the valley, in wild rage of lamentation, came across to us, belike his poor Wife, Sister, Mother; the cruellest sound ever heard; it sounded to me like the *voice* of wretched Ireland at large, that night.

Yesterday, under various guidance, I had "improved farming" (by one Love, a Scotchman) to do; then dinner of sand-

wiches at 4 o'clock, then the immortal Curragh, best *race-course* in creation, say 5,000 acres of the best land in Ireland, grazing at present certain wretched sheep of the adjacent *cottiers*, whose one trade seemed to be that of *gathering up* dung into particular heaps, whereby it did become A. B.'s *own*, but was not the Curragh's any more, nor at all bettered or benefited in any manner of way: a truly "Irish occupation," and nice result of "*laissez-faire*." Into the railway at last; cloud of nasty sand, smoke, etc., with howling hot wind, and stupid, fiercely-stolid-looking people round me for an hour and forty minutes, past Carlow; then two hours more of rail-car, where one could at least smoke, and see the mountains, waving, ill-tilled plains, rugged cabins, pigs, tethered goats (the aristocracy of the poor keep goats about the ditches, and milk them): finally about 10 P. M. I got here to Dr. Cane's, the Mayor's, where Duffy and two Poor-law sages already were, expecting me (*against* the law of Nature and railway bill) since dinner time. You never saw so exotic a house, bedroom, breakfast-room, etc., etc.—but the people are kindness itself, which I were a traitor to receive otherwise than with thanks and respect. At twelve, we go out "in my little carriage" to do the place—*ach Gott!* To-morrow we get fairly under way; Duffy is studying the route, I believe, even now. . . .

Kilkenny is a ruinous, old and venerable city of 20,000; "cloth-trade quite gone to England, all but a few coarse blankets": this morning was market on the streets; ragged, wild people with strong sprinkling of soldiers and police: on the open street, for one thing, sat a row of cobblers mending *extempore* the country people's shoes.—Enough of me, O Goody, enough of me! I suppose you are *bored* with these *topograph-*

icalities; but they run to my pen, and I ought to get them down.—Very *hot* here, I am in an upper room under the slates, open window on each side, and through draft (good for smoking), have put on my *Lustre* (or black cobweb) coat, could gladly go about in my skin.—Am well, really, in spite of defective sleep. Am writing here on the top of a *hydrastisy* binnacle or box-kin, there being no available table, only a big ottoman beside the big bed. . . . Oh Jeannie, Good be ever with you; I must go. "Goodluck follow thee to the Orient,"* and everywhere!

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 198

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Westport, Mayo, 28 July, 1849.

My dear Brother— . . . After Limerick, the Bourke of whom I wrote last, the younger Bourke, accompanied me in a Car to Killaloe, then along to Scarriff (one of the wretchedest spots in Nature), and so along to an "insolvent Union" sixteen miles to the east of Galway,—a drive in all of some 30 or 40 miles. We got there latish; we had a friend, "Inspector Horsley" (grandson of Bishop Horsley) with whom I also had some talk and tea; with him Bourke staid, I went to the Inn to sleep, —but, owing to a *snoring* neighbour, etc., etc., had rather indifferent success. Next morning, a bright sunshiny morning, I got on the coach roof for Galway: 16 miles of the *stoniest* country I ever beheld; infinitely stonier than any Craigenputtock, indeed in many places nothing else but stones. A very poor and desolate country indeed. Yet when cleared and

* See "New Letters and Memorials," ii. 3, n.

cultivated, the soil proves excellent, and everything, shaded and fringed with vegetation, grows really beautiful. Galway itself at length hove in sight, on the northward side of the bright Bay, a very curious, much poverty-struck, yet still respectable old "Spanish" city; where Duffy, parted from me since Limerick, was again in waiting to welcome me to land. It was Assize-time; the Town one vortex of lawyers, not a quiet nook to be had for love or money: so I decided to see swiftly whatever was to be seen, and then take myself away. Letters once read, etc., I accordingly *did* the sights, Duffy and an able Editor escorting me on a car: about 4 P. M. we had "all *by*," and were upon a "bianconi" for Tuam, a small town 16 miles on the Sligo side; where we passed last night; and whence we this day, on a Mail Coach starting at half-past six A. M., arrived at Westport,—the poorest of all Poor Unions in Ireland. It has already spent of British cash £133,000; needs £1,100 per week, has 28,000 paupers (population guessed to be about 45,000), and *did* gather, last week, in actually paid for Poor-rate the sum of £28, the week before, zero! These are strange facts,—facts unexampled hitherto in the annals of Adam's posterity. Accordingly the place, for beggars and such like, passes all belief.—. . .

Your ever affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 199 *

To His Wife, at Auchtertool.

Ballina, Sligo, 29 July, 1849.

Well, Dearest, I trust you have got safe to Auchtertool, and are quiet in Walter's Manse this day: here also am I arrived

* See *ante*, p. 71, n.

safe—2 o'clock of a showery day,—and the first thing I do after washing my face, is to write you account of myself. My poor little Goody, to whom else can I write my sorrows, my "complaints,"—my joys, if I had any considerable?—Bad luck to that quavering, trilling musical jackass with mustachios, a Lieutenant of Foot I judge, who scared us out of one room with his tobacco, and is now singing audibly over all the house, Sabbath tho' it is, and interrupting me here!—

. . . The day before yesterday I wrote to you from Tuam, under the shadow of the big Cathedral of "John of *Chume!*" A nasty product, "John of Chume": we passed his birthplace today; a wild grim patch of farm by the shore of a big desolate lake among the wilderness of stony moors and mountains: a place to nurse a man of some talent into a priest of much fanaticism,—poor "John of Chume," cursing with bell, book and candle, according to his trade!—From Tuam, after a baddish night, we got under way upon the Mail for Castlebar, the County Town of Mayo, and thence for Westport, some forty miles in all: the morning was wettish, but I preferred the outside; smoked and looked, pretty well wrapped up, and nothing to complain of; Duffy inside, and *silence* allowed me. At Castlebar, the rain increasing, Duffy proposed to stop, and not see Westport the *acme* of the Beggary in these parts: I again was clear for persisting; sat accordingly, swiftly wafted into the teeth of a fierce wind and rain, tobacco and my poor umbrella being my only comfort, for the next ten miles; when Westport came in view, a nice-*looking* Town (for all those towns had corn-factors, butter, bacon, land-factors, who built big houses), and the mountain behind it called "Croagh Phaedrig" (Patrick's Hill), where St. Patrick gathered all the serpents and also all the devils, and

making a big mass of them all, in one night, hurled them next morning into Clew Bay and the general Atlantic,—more power to *his* elbow! . . . The "Dean Bourke," Catholic Priest to whom I had a letter from Lord Sligo never shows his face but forty or fifty scarecrows of both sexes fasten on him, soon swelling to four or five hundred; and the poor man, a good-humoured elderly fellow with much snuff on his breastworks, has a sad time of it. "Go, I don't *keer* if ye were dead," he says to them, and doesn't affect any sensibility he cannot feel. A short look at all *this*,—where every second soul is a pauper, and some three score Mothers with infants were to be seen, at the national charges nourishing a *chattery* of new paupers,—sufficed us, and we decided to come back to Castlebar that same night, instead of on the morrow (to-day); and there accordingly we staid, doing all that was doable with *new* Pauper Unions, etc.;—and were about to start this morning hitherward at 11 o'clock, when, lo, the coach horn from the westward sounded; and very blue in the face, but otherwise brisk and lively there rushed in,—W. E. Forster! Shot like a bullet all the way from Rawdon, by excellent calculation he had there hit us! I laughed at the singularity of the thing, and again laughed; and in fact was and am very glad at the rencounter. He stept into our Car, public Car occupied by us alone; and here he is, as large as life, and as full of locomotion as ever!—Let me tell thee now what awaits of motion for the coming few days. My *pen* is very bad; and in addition to the *music*, here are able editors coming, etc., etc.!

To-morrow Duffy and I go to Sligo (only 20 or 30 miles); there, Walker (A. Sterling's friend) keeps us as guests till Wednesday morning; Forster in the meanwhile has other ex-

cursions to make along the shore here, and will rejoin us on Sligo Streets, and mount the Coach or Car with us,—for 30 or 40 miles on; to a little town called Donegal, there I leave *him*, to make his way round by the *coast* to Gweedore; . . . Enough, enough, my poor little wearied woman. To-morrow I expect to hear of you at Sligo; on Wednesday, I am to ask for Forster's Letters at "Letter Kenny," and will ask for myself too, he having *advised* you to write thither, tho' I guess there will be nothing, you being rather *un*advisable!

My poor little Goody—ah me, my heart is sore for thee, and that sad Haddington night * (for I have got all your bits of news out of Forster as we came along, having the whole side of the Car to ourselves): however, it was perhaps *right;* indeed I imagine I should have done the very same myself. God help thee, my little one; think that, beside that Grave, there is also one soul still alive who can never cease to love thee. Yes, after his own wild way,—stern as the way of death, —to love thee: that is a truth, and will remain one. Eheu, eheu!—

But now having got safe to Auchtertool harbour, you will send me Letters in plenty, will you not? At any rate you will lie quiet, and get into heart and health again. And you have your *MS.* with you to copy, if you like; a precious thing indeed!

Duffy has always been kind and loyal to me; but he is not half so good a manager as Forster is: . . .

But, alas, my Dear, I am leaving the able editor to rot; I really must give up. Best regards to your Uncle, whom I hope

* Which Mrs. Carlyle spent alone in the George Inn at Haddington. See *New Letters and Memorials*, i. 265.

soon to see; to Walter himself and Jeannie if she be there. Good be ever with you *my* Jeannie!

Ever your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 200

To Dr. Carlyle.

Glen Truim House, 3 September, 1849.

My dear Brother— . . . This "House" is a new grey granite one, with turrets and gimcracks; but it is by no means useful in proportion to its promise: add to which it is *crowded* to the ridge-tile, nearly twice as many people as are good for it; and the accommodation, even for favoured guests like myself, is by no means very exquisite! My little cell, where I now am, will scarcely *hold* my trunks and me; of drawers, bath, etc., there is no vestige: and one sometimes does not get hot water "because there are not jugs enough, Sir!" However, some are going to-morrow (good speed to them); . . . The departure of one Peer of the Realm makes an immensity of room: so many flunkeys, lady's-maids, etc., are in his train.—The place, for the rest, is overflowed with "Gillies" so-called; a rawboned set of *hallenshakers*, who assist in hunting, every one of whom leads a ragged garron (like the one I have just been on), a *work*-horse in peat or ploughing-time, but equal to carrying a Lordship on the moors when game-time arrives,—the wages are 5/0 a day for gillie and man united. On the whole it is a wondrous-looking life; and the thought that anybody should leave a rural palace in the south, and pay £500 or £1,000 for two months adventure like this,—might justly fill one with aston-

ishment! But "changes are lightsome"; weary are the lives of rich men that require such a change.—Our ladies "sketch," sitting on blocks of granite, and looking out for "effects" upon the distant mountains. To-day they are all off on a visit to the westward, a place called Laggan, where certain Marquises and the like are settled: nothing but Miss Emily Baring,* a solitary sketcher down below, and here I on the second floor back, are left about these premises just now. . . . This will do for a description of my posture here; you have only to fancy the country an open upland moor, of hilly surface, intersected by the Spey and Truim (a bigger Water-of-Milk, each), which join here, Spey from the West, Truim from the South,—a scene not unlike a mixture of Craigenputtock and the Crook Inn: no great shakes of a scene!—but with the air bright and pure; mountains, sunny or shady, from *five* to *ten* different courses or sets of them, rising in the distance, and only one high one, "Craig Dhu," close at hand: add scullions, gillies (as above), French cook, flunkeys, soubrettes, gun-cases and pointer-dogs: you will find it a sufficiently impressive scene of human wisdom, and conceive that a *slightish* dose of it may be expected to suffice for me!— . . .

Ever your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 201

To Dr. Carlyle.

Glen Truim House, 5 September, 1849.

My dear Brother—. . . I am left quite alone to-day, and have the drawingroom, and indeed the house, altogether to

* A sister of Lord Ashburton.

myself for some hours;—plenty of space too for writing, were it not that noises come rather rife from the flunkey region, and still worse that I am but in bad case myself for any epistolary or other exertion. A general party "to picnic with the Abercorn people" "on Loch Ericht": that was the general order of the day; but one Lord, at breakfast time, broke off, preferring "to shoot"; and I, before breakfast time, had already broken off, being in no case for picnics; . . .

More than once, in the *wakerife* hours of night, it has been in my head to take Coach, and come south at once; but when I think of the "good intentions" of everybody to me, I find that I must *finish* my visit, and give it a less unhandsome close than that would be! The more I see of it, the more distracted does this Highland *Gillha'ing** for English people of rank appear to me. The present adventure, Lord Ashburton told me yesterday, costs him about £1,200; and he admitted as we drove along together that it was a very stupid business,—"except in respect of health." I suggested that men really desirous of "hunting" ought to go to Africa with its lions, to America with its bears and boas, to some place where wild animals really are and stand in need of hunting; whereas here, except it be the catching of rats, there is really no legitimate field for the "hunter," and his era is quite done! All this was mildly taken; indeed we had a great deal of serious talk, he and I, as he drove me to and from the scene of adventure (a "fishing" in Loch Ericht yesterday, futile highly, in which I took no share at all, but lay among the heather in solitude for three hours rather); and his Lordship seemed to

* Living in a crowded, uncomfortable house in a solitary place.—*Jamieson.*

be full of "good resolutions," with which, alas, we know what *place* is paved!

. . . The Germans you perceive have been holding a *Festmahl* over Goethe's Centenniversary; but it seems to have succeeded nowhere; not even Humboldt's heavy eloquence could carry it thro' at Berlin;—and on the whole, to Goethe one may say as to others, "*It* can do thi naither ill na guid."

. . . Take care of my Mother, and give my love to all.

Your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 202

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 21 November, 1849.

Dear Sister—. . . The *Cromwell* third edition got out the other day, after weary delays: I sent my Mother a copy, which you will see next time you go into these parts: there are various little fiddling improvements, etc.; but nothing authorizing me to bid any of you concern yourselves with it further: indeed such is the *bother* attending this business, I almost wish (in my impatience) there were no new editions more in my time, that so my poor hands might be rid of it for one thing! But in return it does bring money, more or less; and, I suppose too, it may be doing some good more or less; wherefore we will let it go its gates and not snarl at the *fash* it gives us. In *Fraser's Magazine* for next month, there is furthermore a miserable *dud* of a little Paper* by me: this too you shall by and by see. I struggle daily to get into some black mass of

* "Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question."

From a photograph by John Patrick

SCOTSBRIG

a "Book," or very big story I have to tell: but it will not do yet, alas, no, not at all. It looks as if I had a *continent* of foul liquid *glar* and scavengery to wheel away; barrow, shovels and *self* nearly buried in the vile black infinite of quagmire;—and where to begin, or how to begin, or what on earth to do with myself and it, I cannot at all see. On this side I try, then on that; to no purpose;—and many days I stand merely leaning on my tools in the painfullest, most helpless manner. If the resolution do not die out of me (which may God forbid);—if the divine *rage* were once to catch fire (a frightful state too for the *burning* wretch), I should then make some impression on it! "Dinna gang to dad tysel' a' abreed!" *—alas, there is no other way of stirring from the spot for poor me, whatever there might be for poor old Wull.—Dear Jean, I am at the bottom of my paper now, and *past* the limit of my time; so must off for the present dim day. . . .

Good bye dear Sister; I hope to write again soon.

Yours ever,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 203

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 1 December, 1849.

My dear Mother—. . . I am scribbling daily; but there comes little or nothing yet upon the paper that will answer; in the sorrow of my heart I must just scribble away till we do get nearer the mark. . . .

There is also a kind of speculation about my going down to

* Don't go and scatter yourself all abroad.

Manchester,* and making a *Speech,*—speech in the "School Association" they have there; which I really have some notion of, for it might do good, and would be to myself a real relief: nevertheless, I shudder so at the long ride by rail, at the *dadding of myself abreed* in that way, and at the other conditions of the business, I hardly think there will come a real result out of the speculation. If there do, it is to be on Wednesday week, the 12th December: but you shall hear of me again before that.

. . . Dear Mother, I have got your Dressinggown on; and a capital one it is, and many a time it reminds me of your motherly heart and unwearied goodness to me,—my dear old Mother! I also wear your stockings daily, often the *new* ones of this year. For the rest, I have found out a capital shoemaker, who works in *leather prepared in oil;* and makes shoes of it that need *no blacking,* that do without *tyers* [laces] too (having an *india-rubber* mouthpiece) and, tho' stout enough, are as *soft* almost as buckskin! I think if I had your measure here, I would make him construct you a pair;—and will, against walking time, if you permit me.—. . .

Adieu dear Mother,

THOMAS CARLYLE.

LETTER 204

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 9 January, 1850.

My dear Brother—. . . To-day I send two Books; one of which is *Emerson's Lectures,* a Book of yours, which may perhaps amuse you in a dark evening: it came here, with a

* Did not go. Note by Dr. Carlyle,—on the MS. of this letter.

copy for myself, two nights ago. The other is *Fraser* for my Mother; some better reading in it than usual. An attack on my *Negro Question* is of very slender structure,—I do not in the least know by whom. By some "man of rank," Forster says the Newspapers say; by some poor hide-bound dunce, I have no hesitation in replying.—Alas, this is but the first *sough* of the storm I shall have to raise among that class of cattle, when I do fairly open my pack, and make known to them what my mind is;—as really now must soon be done!

I have been quite overwhelmed with rubbishy labour for two weeks or more; and only got a place of *stopping*, the day before yesterday; very much worn indeed. Chapman is for a "Series of Pamphlets,"—kind of Carlylese "*Tracts for the Times*";—and really I begin to entertain the proposition, as one method of getting my "pack" made lighter. He carried off about ten days ago, *two* "Pamphlets" to make the Printer set them up, etc.; and so soon as all this is settled, I believe they will come out.

Terribly against "voting," philanthropy, etc., etc. One of them has come back in type, but in a wrong *shape:* upon "Model Prisons,"—runs a red-hot poker through all that nasty stuff, of "abolition," etc. The other which is to be the *first* calls itself "The New Era"; upon that I have been puddling ever since you heard last of me. I suppose the thing will have to go on;—and sometimes I am sufficiently alarmed about it! For my stomach and liver, to say nothing of all else, are by no means too strong just now. But I must try to husband myself. I believe I shall have to try the thing!— . . .

Ever yours,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 205

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 26 January, 1850.

Dear Jean—. . . After long tumbling and wrestling about with a mass of confused written-stuff here, which has been oppressing me for months and years past,—I have decided at last to give vent to myself in a Series of Pamphlets; "Latter-day Pamphlets" is the name I have given them, as significant of the ruinous overwhelmed and almost dying condition in which the world paints itself to me. The First, about what they call the "New Era," is to come out at the beginning of February now instant: it is quite gone from *me;* they are printing the *Second* even (which is for March); and I have begun this day to turn the *Third* over in my mind. A questionable enterprise; but I could not help it! I think there will be perhaps a dozen Pamphlets in all,—two volumes when completed; —and it is to be expected they will occasion loud astonishment, condemnation, and a universal barking of "Whaf-thaf? Bow-wow!" from all the dogs of the Parish.—A Paper I published in *Fraser* about *Niggers* has raised no end of clamour; poor scraggy critics, of the "benevolent" school, giving vent to their amazement, and uttering their "Whaf-thaf? Bow-wow!" in a great variety of dialects up and down all the country, as I am informed. That will be neither chaff nor sand to what they will hear in these "Latter-day" Discourses, poor souls! All the twaddling *sects* of the country, from Swedenborgians to Jesuits, have for the last ten years been laying claim to "T.

Carlyle," each for itself; and now they will all find that the said "T." belongs to a sect of his own, which is worthy of instant damnation. All which is precisely as it must be, and as it should be. Nay, we have a considerable amusement over it here; being, I do suppose, about as well situated for speaking what is our own mind on occasion as perhaps any "free king" of these parts, or these times! A much more questionable consideration is that of one's *bodily health* holding out thro' the job:—but that too we must risk; trying to take all precautions as we go. . . . Your affectionate Brother,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 206

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 19 February, 1850.

Dear Jean—Many thanks for your kind Note; which I was right glad to read this morning. I am very glad to hear you express your adherence to the painful doctrine I set forth; it is really a terrible job,—so lonely as I am, no man sharing my adventure, only all men looking at me in it as they would do at a man walking perilously on the roof-ridges,—asking themselves, "when will the dog *fall?*" He won't if he can help it, friends; and he has a bit farther to go!—Almost 30 years back, I can recollect the poor little *Craw Jean* running tripping about my feet, eager to catch what I said, when Jack and Alick were with me; and I have always respected her rugged veracity and strength of natural judgement, and been very glad to be approved by her.

"No. Two" has been done some time; but I am like to break my heart over "No. Three," which seems as if nothing

could *ever* do it! But that is always the way; by some course or other, I shall get thro' No. Three, too, better or worse.—By the bye, as I send *by post* my Mother's Copy, I think there will be one superfluous, remaining on your hands; is there not? If so, I wish you could send it regularly to Gillenbie (whom I quite forgot, till a pair of *wedding cards* came here the other day): if there is *not* a superfluous copy, or if difficulties any way intervene, never mind this at all.—The Pamphlets have "a vigorous sale," the Publisher says; otherwise the response of the public hitherto, I think, is pretty much, All the dogs of the Parish barking sharply, "Whaf-thaf? Bow-wow!" and a few private voices of men saying earnestly "Go on, go on!"—

. . . Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 207

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 28 Feby., 1850.

Dear Brother—. . . I delight to think of my good old Mother having a comfortable Carpet to step on; and you may very confidently assure her, such a pleasure would have been cheap to me at ten times the "expense!" There is a good little Book here for her, which I myself will finish to-night,—Vertot's *Revolution of Sweden*, really good reading,—so soon as her eyes are better. I suppose you direct her in the meantime to give her eyes a holiday, rather, however, she may weary. I wish you had some of our fine February days for her: occasionally quite beautiful days tho' we have a share of mud and tempest still: but we are about a fortnight ahead of you by the Almanac; wait a fortnight and you will be up to us.

The enclosed Letters are not good for much: but I wish my Mother to see the Aberdeen one, and to get your explanation of the "Lord Rectorship" and what kind of wonderful Heroico-farcical Bacon's-play it is! Masson and Bain had called, the night before, and told me about such a thing they had seen in the Newspapers; otherwise it would have quite mystified me when the Letter itself came. To think of running a candidatecy, in such a ploy, along with his Grace, the Duke of Argyle, and indeed of the thing altogether, tickles one a little, not in a disagreeable way. His Grace I suppose stands for the Free Kirk; I for some German neologistic element and Progress of the Human mind; and so the poor boys, in their red cloakies, go running about like hens with egg! Bain and Masson spoke of Lockhart as a nominee too, but he seems to have fallen away.—We do not think there is any chance but *the Duke* will be elected: if it fell out otherwise, Jane asserts I should have to go to Aberdeen and make a lay-sermon;—but we hope better things tho' we thus speak.

I am deep in No. 3 named "Downing Street"; and get on terribly ill. The whole clay of No. 3 is lying here, in print most of it; but the figure wants features, above all wants *eyes;* and my hand is not well *in* just now.—Do not grudge trouble for the *Purgatorio;* I tell you always it will last a very long while in the world! But don't bother too much over "graceful phrases," etc.: direct your whole strength to understand the meaning completely, and to give it with all *exactness;* be satisfied if we have it *intelligible,* and dash along without minding grace. . . .

Yours ever,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 208

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 5 March, 1850.

Dear Brother—I have got my Third No. nearly done: a horrible tussle with it for above a week past! It has now fallen fairly into *two;* and there will be a No. 4 called "New Downing Street" or some such thing. . . . No news at all from Aberdeen; so that we are happy to believe they have elected his Grace—more power to their elbow! I would not have gone to Aberdeen just now, and opened my tinkler jaw, for many pounds.

Everybody is raging at No. Three; at least so I hear,—for I read nothing of all that, and have not the smallest curiosity to read it. I suppose the thing to be partly *true;* and if so it will do them "a deal of good" by and by.—I am now engaged on No. Four, and have got it also well advanced. Pity me, wish me well thro' this ugly job. "A great demand for men to go on the forlorn hope at present!" said Thornton Hunt* to me the other day.

By the bye Thornton with Lewes,† etc., are thinking of the *Socialist* line, I grieve to observe, in that Newspaper‡ of theirs. Masson is not to be of them: instead of Masson is Ballantyne (once of Manchester, *now* an outler, poor fellow), and one Linton, a noisy worshipper of George Sand! *Aus dem wird Nichts* [out of that will come nothing].—Thornton, a clever

* Leigh Hunt's eldest son.

† George Henry Lewes, critic, biographer, popular science writer, etc.

‡ The *Leader*.

little creature, deliberately contemplates "revolution," *dangerous* upbreak of the Lower Classes, as the one thing that will make the Governing Classes serious, or do any good! He knows little what he is saying there. . . . Take my Mother up the Langlands, the first sun-blink you have. Blessings on her and you all!

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 209

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 29 March, 1850.

My dear Mother—Nobody can well be *busier* than I at present: but here is a little message for you. I am just about fairly *thro'* my No. 4 (which comes out on the 15th of April); and I mean to have *one* silent day, walking out among the heaths, before I begin No. 5. This is fine sunny weather (tho' with frost still) and most agreeably *silent*, to-day being what they call "Good Friday,"—an old festival of the Church, now chiefly employed by the mass of the English population in taking jaunts into the Country, comforting their souls with beer, and eating a kind of puffy butter-*scons* called "cross-buns," *cookies* with a cross stamped on them,—sacred to this good day! Not sleeping well, I went out for a walk this morning; all was grey, dim, and *snell* as winter: but at the "Original Chelsea Bunhouse" (for we pique ourselves on our fame for buns), there was a gathering as of people about the drawing of a lottery; I stept near, it was poor souls crowding forward for their *buns*, and Baker and Wife serving them eagerly out of door and window: all *silent* too,—an affair of real business, and no mistake. At richer doors, as I walked along, Bakers' men were

delivering the same sacred very edible article; at one particular door, it seemed to me as if the maid were taking about five dozen or so;—many children, and their bits of appetites good! "Got your *buns*, old boy?" the workmen said to one another as they hurriedly saluted. A fine *well-living* people this,—after all!

The noise about those Pamphlets is very great, and not very *musical*,—but indeed I take care not to hear it, so don't care. Chapman is about printing the fourth thousand of No. One, which he thinks naturally is good work. What he means to give *me*, I do not yet ascertain; but have decided that he shall let me know accurately in black on white within a week,—while I have the hank in my own hand!—A certain *second* Chapman * here (John knows him) called the other morning with an offer of £4 10s. for a copy of each No., "*one steamer* before it was published." I instantly said, "done!" He has got the First accordingly, and paid me for it; the second he will get in about a week, and pay me for it;—and I decide to give these two American first windfalls, one of them to Jane, and the other to my good old Mother by way of gratification to myself. Jane has got hers; and here is yours, dear Mother,—buy yourself something you may like with it, or make some loved soul a gift out of it, let me have that little pleasure to myself in secret! . . . Poor Jane has caught a kind of real *cold* at last; but it seems fast going again, tho' she is still a prisoner.

Adieu, dear Mother,

Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

* John Chapman, bookseller; the *first* Chapman being Frederick, the publisher.

From a photo. by R. Tait, June, 1855

JANE W. CARLYLE, ÆT. 54

LETTER 210

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 25 April, 1850.

My dear Sister— . . . I am still full of business; struggling now with No. 6, which is to be called "Parliaments," and will be comparatively a tame piece. The "New Downing Street," I fancy has not yet reached Dumfries; but it will surely come,—and be welcome, as *new* potatoes always are, however late the season. I could have sent it too by post, very easily; but I judged there would be little delay,—and that it would be like buying new vegetables (as they do here just now at extravagant rates) *before* the due season for them. "Stump Orator" (a command to all men to hold their tongues more) is lying ready against Wednesday first:—I begin now to look *down hill*, or almost down hill, over my contemplated dozen; and can hope I shall get wrestled thro' them,—tho' the outlook farther on is very dim yet. Reasonable words, some few, have been spoken to me and of me; unreasonable very many. . . .

I stopped your Newspaper as ordered. The *Leader* is a very good Paper hitherto; indeed I take it out as the best I can get here for my own use. Jack gets it all Tuesdays: if you bid him, I suppose, he could send it on to you after Mother and he have done with it. The Paper has a *Socialist* tendency (it is understood) but they keep that under hatches pretty well. Leigh Hunt's eldest Son, a really clever, little brown-skinned man, and true as steel in his way, is Editor; he and a certain *dramatic* G. H. Lewes, an *airy* loose-tongued merry-hearted being,

with more sail than ballast,—they, on the funds of a certain heterodox Lincolnshire Parson* whom I have seen, "carry on the work of the day." . . .

LETTER 211

To Leight Hunt, Kensington.

Chelsea, 17th June, 1850.

Dear Hunt—I have just finished your *Autobiography*, which has been most pleasantly occupying all my leisure these three days; and you must permit me to write you a word upon it, out of the fulness of my heart, while the impulse is still fresh to thank you. This good Book, in every sense one of the *best* I have read this long while, has awakened many old thoughts, which never were extinct, or even properly *asleep*, but which (like so much else) have had to fall silent amid the tempests of an evil time,—Heaven mend it! A word from me, once more, I know, will not be unwelcome, while the world is talking of you.

Well, I call this an excellent good Book; by far the best of the autobiographic kind I remember to have read in the English language; and indeed, except it be Boswell's of Johnson, I do not know where we have such a Picture drawn of a human Life as in these three volumes. A pious, ingenious, altogether *human* and worthy Book; imaging, with graceful honesty and free felicity, many interesting objects and persons on your life-path,—and imaging throughout, what is best of all, a gifted, gentle, patient and valiant human soul, as it buffets its way

* Probably the Rev. Mr. Elwin who, about this date or soon afterwards, became co-editor with Lockhart of the *Quarterly Review*, and later sole editor.

thro' the billows of time, and will not drown, tho' often in danger; *cannot* be drowned, but conquers, and leaves a track of radiance behind it: that, I think, comes out more clearly to me than in any other of your Books;—and that I can venture to assure you is the best of all results to realize in a Book or written record. In fact this Book has been like an exercise of *devotion* to me: I have not assisted at any sermon, liturgy or litany, this long while, that has had so *religious* an effect on me. Thanks in the name of all men. And believe along with me that this Book will be welcome to other generations as well as ours. And long may you live to write more Books for us; and may the evening sun be softer on you (and on me) than the morn sometimes was!

Adieu dear Hunt (you must let me use this familiarity, for I am an old fellow too now as well as you). I have often thought of coming up to see you once more; and perhaps I shall one of these days (tho' horribly sick and lonely, and beset with spectral lions, go whitherward I may): but whether I do or not, believe forever in my regard. And so God bless you,—prays heartily T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 212

Leigh Hunt to Carlyle.

Kensington, June 21, 1850.

My dear Carlyle—After having been so long flustered and rendered inoperative by pains and troubles, I have been treated in the same manner, this week past, by an incursion of pleasures; —letters, to wit, from valued friends, making much of me beyond anything I had looked for, and indeed taking away, as it were, the very breath of my responsiveness, yours most of all,

so that I did not know what to say or where to begin; and you may imagine how extreme the pleasure was in your instance, when it surmounted, nay, wholly drowned the very pain I felt at your giving me no pain at all, not a single word of spleen or reproof, but a very torrent of nothing but honey,—pure love and self-forgetfulness, or only such self-remembrance as made the sweet the sweeter, and superiority to everything but the desire of all good hearts to find some ground for humanity to rest upon between this world and the next. It did not astonish me; for I knew what honey there was in the jaws of Samson's lion, and I have always said that of such stuff your secret inner nature was altogether made; though I confess I did not think sufficiently well of myself to suppose that I should ever be the man to awaken thus its whole manifest fountain. Nor, believe me, do I think that it is myself that has done it even now, in spite of all the kind things which you say of me, and which assuredly you therefore feel. I know not what objections you withhold, nor how far accord with my mere self has anything to do with the matter; nor, reverence for you, my dear friend, apart, do I care; for I merge, as you do, the smaller thing in the greater, and only rejoice to see your great and strong spirit sitting, even if it be but to refresh yourself for new combats, in that region of peace which others have found for us, and to attain which, in some finality or other, can be the only lasting object of all greatness and all strength, unless combat itself under a sense of dissatisfaction and heart-discord (a very different thing, I conceive, from combat physical, or the concords and discords of the elements) be our sole human destiny and mode of being; which is what the whispers of the great Spirit of the Universe to our hearts do not seem to allow.

At all events I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your letter, and cannot but feel proud of it, whether my pride be right or wrong. As to visits, I know all about them, and have reciprocated with you a thousand *in velle;* for there is a being *in velle* as *in esse* and *posse*. I know how great the distance is sometimes between *ailer* and *ailer*, however short the parish measurement. I was more than half a year the other day, without crossing the threshold even to see a neighbour; and I am only now seeing my neighbour and my very son at Hammersmith. But on Tuesday next, if you are not engaged that evening, I propose to come after tea and take my good old North-British supper with you.* Pray tell Vincent† if I may come; and believe me, my dear kind Carlyle,

Your ever respectful and affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

P. S.—Those unctuous blots you see in my letter are not quite as vile as they seem. They are honest effulgences of good palm candle, used in sealing a letter.—Pray accept the book I send, however superfluous.

LETTER 213

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 2 July, 1850.

Dear Brother— . . . Here is the "Hudson's Statue," a very bad Pamphlet; but the *best* my biliary and other demons would allow me to make it; and now happily the last save one: that is the beautiful property of it! These two days I have sat

* A bowl of oat-meal porridge.

† A son of Hunt's, living near Carlyle.

over *Jesuitism* (for yesterday I fairly gave up sitting, and took to lying on the sofa, and reading): I do not remember that for many years I have been in worse case for writing. Nevertheless I will do it; as our brave Father used to say, "I will *gar* myself do it." Nay it will be much easier if I were once fairly into it. Rightly done it cannot by any method be just now: it is but the beginning of a *boundless* subject.

On Saturday evening there occurred a thing which I doubt will prove a national tragedy;—for the *death* of Sir R. Peel at present would be that! Have you heard of it? He was riding up Constitution Hill on a new young horse; a prancing horse and groom came by; Peel's horse pranced and slipt, flung up its heels; the poor rider fell *on his head* over its ears, and somehow pulled it down upon him: he lies in great danger ever since; collar-bone, etc., were broken, the *new horse* was all broken and crushed; the fear is of the *head;*—to-day, the Postman tells us, the bulletin is, "Had a bad night, and is worse!" Everybody is in great anxiety: Chorley and I went up yesterday, to gather tidings, all the back space in Whitehall was swarmed with carriages and foot-folk: *ay de mi*, I fear the worst, and it makes me really sad. . . .

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 214

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, Wednesday (3.30 p.m.), 3 July, 1850.

Dear Brother—It is all over with poor Peel! The accounts yesterday were of various tenor, generally black and bad,—a great crowd of people, poor and rich, streaming about all day,

and large placard-bulletins handed out to them;—in the evening we heard that there was a *marked improvement;* poor Peel had risen, washed his teeth, etc.—and alas, alas, about eleven at night, he died, and it was all ended! Lady Ashburton was here this forenoon with the news; all in tears recently and even still; going out to Addiscombe to be in silence till Monday. The public emotion is very great. Peel retained his consciousness, his perfect composure,—took the sacrament, took farewell of them all.—I have not been so sad over the loss of any public man in my time. That meeting I had with him in the Horseguards,* of which I told you, has now become a truly mournful and tragic one.

My dear Mother and you and all of them are likely to feel an interest in this sad news; so I send it, tho' without time for a word more. My morning's work has *utterly failed,*—but I cannot help it now; I must out at present, and try to do better to-morrow.

Ever your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 215

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Boverton, Cowbridge, South Wales,

3 August, 1850.

My dear Sister—. . . I left Chelsea on Wednesday; staid all night at Bath (90 or 100 miles off) with one Savage Landor,

* "Met Peel in the Horseguards (building) about ten days ago. He looked well and cheerful; came forward and shook hands. Tom was on the way to call at his house, which is near the Horseguards, and had been dining with him a few days before. J. A. C." (*Note by Dr. Carlyle on forwarding the above letter to his mother.*)

an honourable, angry-tempered old literary gentleman; came on next morning to Bristol (10 or 15 miles), got straightway into a Welsh Steamer there; sailed two and a half hours across to Cardiff, and was there taken up by Charles Redwood, my "beneficent Welsh Attorney" into his hospitable "tub-gig," and rolled away hither some 13 or 14 miles into the interior, to his strange Hermitage here at Boverton, where I hope to continue in unexampled quietude, sea-bathing and riding, and doing nothing at all, for a week or two; and so gather vigour for further adventures.

It is the most sequestered mode of life I ever had experience of in this world. The place is altogether in a wild unfrequented tho' flat and not naturally unfruitful district, which extends between Cowbridge (a smartish *yellow-ochred* Town, equal to Lockerby or so) and the solitary south coast; a country all cut with the roughest bridle-lanes in every direction, and hardly any smooth road; every mile or so a straggling, sleepy, sluttish-looking Village, or Clachan of 50 or 100 souls (generally with some ruinous old castle in it); and the sea and "the English Hills" (Somersetshire Hills) always visible near by to the south. We are about a mile from the sea-beach here, where there is excellent bathing, in perfection of solitude: Redwood goes off to Cowbridge daily to his Office after breakfast; and leaves me bird-alone in the House, where there is not even a servant to disturb me,—his two servants live in a house entering by another door, and are always within call, but not under this roof.—We are *in* a kind of Village, "Boverton," but cut off from it too by walls, trees, bushes and lawns, as if it were fifty miles away. . . . If this will not do for a Hermitage, there is no use trying that trade at all! Add to everything, that Red-

wood is a very *taciturn* man,—not a "*conversical* man" by any means;—and likes and honours me very much: a man that seems to have less intercourse with his neighbours than any other man now living, I should say! . . . He furnishes me with a capital horse (*big* pony kind) moreover; and I mean to have a dip in the sea every day while I am here. . . .

Jesuitism I suppose came out last Thursday; you will soon get it, and that ends the Ball.* Adieu, dear Jean; commend me to James and them all, till we meet

Your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 216

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Chelsea, 15 November, 1850.

My dear Brother—. . . I was utterly done before, in the end of July last, I could get those wild *Pamphlets* off my hand; the last two in particular did try all the obstinacy I was master of; and really, to my own mind, had something of worth in them in that respect, if in no other. They have done little for me hitherto, these *Pamphlets*, in any outward respect; the money of them (which however I could happily do independently of) has been mostly pocketed by the Bookseller; so negligent was I in bargaining about them; and as to their reception from mankind, you never in your life heard such a screaming and squealing,—a universal "*screigh*† as of stuck

* Alluding to the story of a man in church, who, on awakening, called out "just anither half-mutchkin, and that will *end the Ball*,"—to the astonishment of the minister and congregation.

† Screech.

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pigs," stuck to the heart, all running about with gillies* in their sides, and bleeding to death by the hand of a *friend!* Really it was something like that; but there were other better sounds also perceptible in a low key; and as I kept far away from the universal "screigh," and would not read a word of the balderdash that was written upon me, and was zealously abetted by my Wife in that obstinate course too,—it was in truth rather entertaining to hear the said universal "screigh" from the distance, and served as a sign that at least the medicine had been *swallowed*, and that probably (as old Keble used to say) "it had took an effect upon them."—In late weeks, now that the thing is all over, I find the tone perceptibly altering, and have no doubt it will alter to the right pitch, or even beyond it,—like the Irishman's jamb, "plumb *and more.*" They had much need of a dose like that, the stupid blockheads of this generation.

But the fact is, being quite knocked up by such a job, following on many other rubs and injuries to one's nerves, I ran off to a certain friendly hermit's in South Wales (one Redwood's, about 120 miles off), as the quietest shelter I could think of in the attainable parts of this world; to try for a little rest there. . . . After three weeks or more of very torpid yet agitated existence, I set off towards Scotsbrig; had an unpropitious journey, so far as weather, inns, companioncy, sleep and other outward things went;—and was at last in a deluge of rain, taken up by Jamie on the street of Annan (in the old fashion *you* can well remember), and set down at Scotsbrig to tea with my good old Mother once again in this world. Ah me! You can fancy what a strange mixed emotion;—for a man

* Butcher-knives.

half-mad with weary misery of body, more especially! Here I staid near a month, with *as* little stir as it was possible for me to contrive: I meant always to write to you during that month; but always missed it. In fine, I had to lift anchor again, and steer Southward, homeward; and so after various hoverings about, I am only got fairly *settled* at home a few weeks ago,—for there has been much bother with change of servants, etc., and it has only got *completely* to an end lately;—and so here I at last am, writing to my Brother a few words over the sea.

Our good old Mother is wonderfully cheerful and well, considering all that she has now seen and suffered: brave old Mother! . . . Her hand shakes perhaps rather worse too, especially when she is out of order; but she does not complain of that either. She reads with all the old eagerness; is ever full of interest and affection for you and me and all that pertains to her; occasionally even *jokes*, in her old genial way;—twice or thrice she had a *washing* while I was there, and did it all herself and well. The chief falling off one sees in her is the facility with which any ailment knocks her quite down: she can stand almost nothing in the way of injury; her little stock of strength is not adequate for *any* extraordinary draft upon it. But in general she shifts along wonderfully, still; used to walk with me to the Backburn and round by the Fairy Brae, chatting and picking up sticks by the way: she was a sad but also the beautifullest sight to me always. Jack's residence at Scotsbrig (where he continues pretty steadily, doing gratuitous medicine) is an immense help to her: indeed if he were not there, I should not feel easy in the arrangement that now is. . . . Jack is still hearty, restless, tho' very grey now. Jamie even has

grey hairs; and as for me, I am rapidly tending in that direction, quite silvery on the "*haffits*" ("half-heads"), and getting a grim, austere and I hope rather *venerable* aspect! It is the way of all men and of all things, dear Brother; let us all learn to grow *old*, as we must; and know that age too has its beauty to the view. . . .

Your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 217

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 27 December, 1850.

My dear Mother—. . . Dear good Mother, I hope you keep close by the fire, and take every care of yourself, in this grim season of the year. We are now *past* the shortest day; and, after many storms, may look to brighter shining of the sun:—as in life itself, is not this the case? We have hope, thro' our Maker's goodness, of a time that shall be always calm weather!—

Jane and I are both pretty well here; she is out to-day, for a walk; goes out almost daily, having never yet been disabled by cold: yesterday I went for a long round into the country; had *gutta-percha* soles, which secured me against the mud; I took the little dog* with me, which amused me by its happy gambollings, and huntings of sparrows; by choosing my road well, I was on *three* open heaths, fine green places with trees, whinbushes, and grazing sheep and *cuddies:*† after several hours of walking I got home in good time for dinner, and feel

* Nero. † Asses.

decidedly fresher to-day. Indeed I think I am getting fairly clearer and into a quieter state of health than when you saw me last in Annandale, such an *Ettercap* as I was!—The faithless Bookseller has never yet sent your *Cruikshank;* but no matter, I have got you a good *union-dress* again, and shall send it (*it*, if there be nothing more) in a little while.

We are very quiet in general; many of the people we know best are still in the country; and at present there is little going on here but *eating of turkeys*, a business with which we do not much concern ourselves! I have not yet got into any kind of fixed work; but I keep scratching and scraping, endeavouring to *break* the ground somewhere or other: all evening I spend in reading; take a stride out, round by Hyde-Park Corner oftenest (which is four miles in all, and leads one just into the nook of busy London) before going to bed; Jane has a morsel of porridge ready when I return, and that with a little reading after she is gone, shuts up the day. We have had almost no frost yet, but much mud and fog. The other night (perhaps it was Monday last) on approaching Hyde Park about 11 at night, I fell in with such a scene of fog as I had never seen before even here. Confused ho-hoing and mournful uncertain sounds of men; then some dull flames, occasionally shaking sparks from them, which one recognises to be "tar-ruffles": at a distance of a few yards they seemed dull *dead-lights* borne each by a vague black blot or cloud, for the whole air seemed opaque and thick as pease-soup: the ground too was slippery with slight frost and most of the horses were unroughened. . . . Take care of yourself, dear Mother!

Your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 218

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 12 January, 1851.

My dear Brother—. . . Our "Crystal Palace" (bless the mark!) is nearly glazed-in: you never saw such a monster of a *gigantic Birdcage* in your life; it covers about all that space of riding-ground *between* Rotten Row and the Horse Barracks, 22 acres I am told; beyond question a most ingenious and appropriate structure; indeed the only *clever* or truly human thing about the whole business, so far as my feelings go. Never in the world's annals, I believe, was there a *building* of such extent finished in ten times the *time* by hand of men;—and here Paxton (whose ingenuity is the soul of it, and *enables* him to employ tens of thousands upon it at once) has got it all but ready as per contract; and once its use is over, he can build it again into two streets of dwelling houses, into a village of iron cottages, or a world of garden green-houses, without losing a pound of the substance employed (putty excepted). That I call clever; the rest is like to be all fudge and boisterous ostentation: I already have my own thoughts about flying far away from London till it is over! . . .

LETTER 219

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 24 January, 1851.

My dear Brother—. . . You need not send those Prison Reports, tho' I am glad to hear of new progress in that direc-

tion, on that particular matter: indeed I perceive the *Model-Prison* concern is falling into such a state in many men's minds, there will before very long be an end of *it*. One particular infatuation will be abated;—I see also there is everywhere a stirring towards setting Paupers (and much more Criminals and Felons) into *employment* and under *real* drill and "instruction": good will come of all that by slow degrees, and after many days, as usual. We have lately had a certain Prison Inspector *Perry* (once a Doctor, Darwin's Friend) calling on us; he took us to the Pentonville Model one day (a truly villainous incarnation and putrefaction of Benevolent Tartuffery); he also, I find is warmly of my opinion about "Devil's regiments of the line." . . .

LETTER 220

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 29 March, 1851.

My dear Brother—. . . My little bit of writing which has held me busy lately is now over, or nearly so for the moment, and I mean to have a loose day or two for rest before further enterprising. It was a sketch of John Sterling's Life which I have been putting down; uncertain what to do with it: but Jane, reading it yesterday, warmly votes for immediate printing; so that probably will be its fate,—so soon as I have got a *second* edition made of it. I guess there is at present about half a volume; with some Letters, etc., that are to go in, and other extensions that will be permissible or useful; it will make a small volume perhaps by itself; and, being a *true* story, containing light glimpses into several things, may be read without

harm by those interested.—I was bound to do it; and it has not been very ill to do.

Duffy is here, for two weeks past; going to-morrow; we have seen but little of him,—tho' he is near by; staying in your old room, since ten or twelve days. . . .

LETTER 221

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 18 April, 1851.

My dear Brother— . . . Jane is pretty well; eats daily with relish, to breakfast, as I do with still more emphasis, a bit of the excellent Annandale Ham (tell our Mother); walks a tolerable space; and is in better spirits than one often sees in her case. The dog Nero . . . goes out with her in the forenoon, out with *me* towards midnight (often about eleven) and is the happiest of little dogs, poor wretch! . . .

I have been thinking much about this strange experiment of the French, with their forty-feet wire pendulum, to *prove* that the Earth turns on its axis. One night, lately, bursting awake, and getting into all manner of chaotic meditations, this pendulum among other things came into my head; and I then first saw that it was not "impossible"; that it was an indubitable *fact*,—and probably the beautifullest *experiment* that has been made in our epoch. Take such a pendulum (four or five pounds of metal, 35 ft. of fine wire) to the Pole of the world: it was there I first got to see it. Hang it up directly over the N. Pole; put a radiated circle (any figure of a circle, like a common *cart-wheel* under it; and set the pendulum swinging; pendulum *will* swing "always in the same plane;" circle of course

will go round under it (*half*-round, the pendulum will seem to go, till the wire get half a twist, then *back* by the other semi-circle while it untwists itself): in 24 hours the pendulum will have swung every conceivable diameter of your circle,—and proved to all creatures that the Earth turns! The like, more or less, will take place at every latitude; under highly complex conditions at every latitude but zero, and always with longer *time* (at London, or latitude 52°, it is said to require 30 hours instead of 24), the pendulum will work round the circle,—till you get towards the Equator where it would require thousands of *years* to do it; and *at* the Equator it cannot be done at all. Is not this pretty? It will exhaust all the resources of your Solid Geometry to get it properly conceived; and indeed those (if they are like mine) will not suffice to do it. But the thing in general is *indubitable;* and among scientific nicknacks certainly altogether bears away the palm. A prettier experiment one could hardly imagine.—N. B. They have no "apparatus" (and I doubt can have none) "for keeping the pendulum in motion": you merely set it swinging, and it will go for half an hour, within which time, within the fourth of which time, the effect (they say) is quite noticeable.—Forgive me, dear Brother, for bothering you so long about this; and, except you have leisure, don't take it into your head at all, or perhaps you may not so soon get it out again! Unless indeed *Dante* will drive it out; with which task I doubt not you continue always busy. . . .

LETTER 222

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig

Chelsea, 6 May, 1851.

Dear Brother— . . . Printer Robson has got the first leaves of Sterling's Life; these were in such a confusion that I could not handily read or revise them: I suppose the Bookling had better be printed and off my hand, tho' it is good for almost nothing. Chapman is willing; Fuz also has read and pronounced it to be readable:—have *done* with it!—

I have lately resumed my Danish; am strongly bent on getting the Scandinavian, Norman, etc., part of my affairs set in order. I saw Bunsen, one day, who has now *lost* all his Norse Books; he lent me a little thing of Grimm's; and was very kind. Full of windy admiration for the ignorant present, as usual withal. A certain Secretary of his, one Dr. Pauli, came to me by invitation some nights after; an intelligent laborious young man, but not deeper in Norse than myself, I find. Did not you once possess an Iceland *Reading Book;* kind of recent "Collection" for the use of learners? If so, I will spend a shilling in having it carried up to me again.—*Item*, a reading book of Anglo-Saxon? Your Dictionary of that is here. Our Dr. Pauli really knows something of Anglo-Saxon; and I would take a lesson or two from him by some opportunity.

Our industrial Exhibition gathered 750,000 human souls round it last Thursday; Jane and I sallied into the City, where all business too was at a stand. I have fine solitary roads on the Surrey side; all the Blockheadism being gathered to the "Glass Palace" so-called. . . . T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 223

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, June, 1851.

My dear Jean—I am kept terribly busy at this time; printing that volume on *John Sterling,* which needs a great deal of *fiking* and revising before the Printers get it and also after. Besides I vehemently urge speed upon them; being impatient to have it done. They are not yet quite clear of a *third* of it; and it will be six weeks or so (I fear, the lazy dogs) before they will let me altogether out of it. I send a snip of one of the pages,—out of the Waste-basket. It will be a readable enough little thing, a thing also which I was bound to write; and otherwise it will be good for next to nothing whatever.

I have written off to Woolner (T. Woolner, 101 Stanhope Street, Mornington Crescent, Hampstead Road), the Sculptor of that *Medallion;** who is to send you a copy *framed* (a facsimile of one we have here): he will send it by railway, so soon as ready; and I will settle his little account for him, poor fellow, —intending to make you a present of this wonderful article! It really seems to me, and to some surer judges, a rather clever thing,—as certainly to the little Sculptor himself: a very good young fellow, who we hope will come into notice yet.—Do not be impatient, if he delay a little; for he seems to be rather slow in such operations: you shall get notice so soon as the thing is on the road.

Poor Jenny † she has left us now; and all her sufferings and

* Of Carlyle.

† His sister, Mrs. Hanning, who had just sailed for Canada to rejoin her husband there.

confusions on this side of the water are winded up,—to open, in a new chapter, we know not how, beyond seas far away! I was very glad to hear our Mother took it so bravely. . . .

I have been in the Crystal Palace; went with Jane weeks ago. . . . I pronounced it to be superlatively well got up. . . .

LETTER 224

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 3 October, 1851.

My dear Brother—I am safe home again out of France . . . out of it all without *skaith;* have kept my promise; and am right glad to be at home anchored in my own quiet cell again, not to stir from it I hope for a very long while!—My supply of *sleep* was very scanty at Paris, such the noises of our unfortunate Hôtel quarters; otherwise my reception was of the best, and a strange new scene of life was suddenly laid open to me, which, so far as *eyes* would go, I had no objection to study. Strange, ever-simmering, quaint, conceited, revolutionary Vanity Fair! Of men, except M. Thiers whom I had met before, and whom I did not *much* care for (Heaven knows), I saw no one whom I did not almost rather *dis*like to see. A sad incredulous shallow grimacing set. Cavaignac had gone to the country. 'Changarnier we saw one evening in the Theatre: a biggish, baggy-faced old man (towards sixty) with small hook-nose, sulky mouth and eyes, high brow, and black *wig* (very low over the *ears*); I have somewhere seen a retired Scotch tobacconist, of obstinate atrabiliar temper, who considerably resembled him. . . .

LETTER 225

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 7 October, 1851.

My dear Brother— . . . Paris looks very odd to me across the realities of Chelsea. On the whole, a sordid, ragged kind of object, tho' frilled and gilt. Of all the cities in nature I feel as if there were *least* there for the essential soul of man. Tuilleries Garden, Champ-de-Mars, etc., etc., struck me most, this time, by their dingy, dirty, unswept condition; poor Champ-de-Mars, and its Feast-of-Pikes Embankment! The Embankment once "30 feet high" has now flattened itself out to 8 or 10, is all over with *weeds*, its trees all scrubby, and many pieces of it torn quite away;—lying waste as the *Ha' Quarry*,* with mere balloons and Reviews, that poor Champ-de-Mars. And a people of such *Seichtheit* [shallowness] and such crankling self-conceit! The *innumerable* soldiers, patrols, corps-de-garde, etc., strike you much everywhere; five per cent. of the population seem to be in those red trousers (shaped like a *pair of bellows* from the waist downwards), in those pinched blue coaties and strange porringer caps! But they are very civil, all, poor devils;—and, as I said to myself, have *resolved* into the marrow of the bone that they will *either* have something genuine to govern them or else will fight perpetually (at short intervals) till they all die. Which really is something considerable, after all. And very tragic surely, with their present outlooks.—I remarked that the only clever, really solid and able men I saw

* Disused quarry near Ecclefechan, Dumfriesshire.

were of the Industrial sort; *chefs d'atelier*, manufacturers of bronzes, hatters and the like: giants in stature and veracious as prophets, in comparison with Thiers and the Parliamentary and literary canaille! In which fact lay room for reflexions very many.

Last night I was reading in the *Quarterly Review:*—very beggarly Crokerism, all of copperas and gall and human *baseness*, upon Maurice and Kingsley among other "revolutionary literature." No viler mortal calls himself man than old Croker at this time. In the rest of the Number is mere torpor and vacuity: alas, alas, how one is changed since the like of that seemed glorious and a revelation! . . .

LETTER 226

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 11 October, 1851.

Dear Jean—. . . To-day I understand my poor little Book is coming out;—to-day or soon it must come out; . . . No "new work"; alas, no, there is a long groping and stumbling about before I can hope to fix on any new job that shall seem worthy! But I must try; and *keep* groping at least. We shall perhaps be a little quieter now, now that the Glass Balderdash is going to take wing. *It* goes to-day, forevermore (thank Heaven);—but, alas, there will new and ever new *come*, so long as we stay in this world, I believe! For example, there is a sublime Hungarian called Kossuth ("*Koshoot*" they pronounce it) just approaching our shores; and blaring and babble enough there will be about him, God wots. To me he is hitherto nothing but a bag of mutinous playactor *wind*, very doubtful

whether he *is* anything more to anybody; and I mean to keep well clear of him for the present. "Kossuth is coming!" said a joyful little man (Lewes of the *Leader*) whom I met yesterday on the Street: "Kossuth is coming!"—"Yes," answered I, "but Kossuth will *go* again; that is perhaps the beautiful part of the news! All nonsense *goes*, if it cannot be prevented from coming." . . .

Since my return from France I have done little but *sleep;* not for a long while have I executed as much sleep in the same time. Which of course is extremely beneficial to me. I take a walk duly every morning, too; and begin to hope that my water-cure * account, when I get it well summed up, will turn out in my favour rather. . . .

LETTER 227

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig

Chelsea, 24 October, 1851.

My dear Brother—. . . I am reading a great many Books, Ducarel's *Normandy*,† etc., etc., and thinking a great many sombre enough thoughts, analogous to the brown-yellow livery of the season: but I cannot expect yet, with the least certainty, to fix upon any new continuous enterprise. Heavy *immeasurabilities* of labour are no longer exciting to me but rather deterring and alarming: "*le jeu vaut-il la chandelle?*" I now ask that with more seriousness than I was wont in former years. Panizzi ‡ and the whole world (which Panizzi accurately

* At Dr. Gully's, Great Malvern, where he and Mrs. Carlyle had spent the month of August.

† André Ducarel's "Anglo-Norman Antiquities."

‡ Librarian of the British Museum.

enough represents) are a formidable barrier against any earnest work of the historical kind. We shall see. I keep very silent, have as little as possible to do with any of my fellow creatures at present; and in fact am, as I sometimes perceive, perhaps the most solitary of all the sons of Adam now alive on this Planet. That too, tho' not a joyous position, has its own advantages, if we will stand to it rightly, in an epoch such as ours. —Thackeray was here the other night, "just waiting for his dinner hour" somewhere: perhaps I told you? We have had Mazzini too, and Masson and Bain, and others:—Eheu. Mazzini says, Ledru-Rollin is perfectly *certain* to be President next May! No saying.—. . .

LETTER 228

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.[1]

Chelsea, 12 November, 1851.

My dear Jean—I yesterday sent you off a little Book, *Highland Notebook* the title of it, where you will find various little pieces fit enough for a quarter of an hour's reading. . . . In regard to your reading, I think it is a pity, since you have time and energy, that you did not get some weightier kind of Books, out of which real knowledge might come to you; for example, Books of History, of which there are several at Scotsbrig or attainable enough elsewhere; which you could read carefully, having a Map at hand, and attending to the *chronology*, that is, keeping both places and dates steadily before you:—for example, have you ever read any good History of England (Hume's, Henry's); Robertson's Scotland; Robertson's America (a most entertaining book); his Charles the

Fifth, etc., etc.? There is a good stock of such Books; and that is the way to read with advantage. I recommend also Homer's *Iliad*, and Translations of all the old Greek and Roman Books, called *Classics;* of which Jack, I believe, has some store; at anyrate plenty of them are to be had now comparatively speaking, and very cheap. It would be worth your while to have some solid good Book always at *your* hand too (like James) when you have a little leisure. Take some thought of this; and, after consulting Jack, and still more your own *real* notion, ask me to help in any way I can.—I am glad to hear that James takes to Geometry: that is a noble department of human acquisitions; and if he were once fairly started in that, he may prosecute it on his own strength to any extent he likes. Let him state all his difficulties to the Doctor, who was an excellent pupil of mine in old days, and understands the subject perfectly (or did "above thirty years ago!") . . .

LETTER 229

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 20 November, 1851.

My dear Brother—. . . We keep very quiet and studious; I reading Preuss's *big* Book of Frederick the Great, a terrible hulk of a compilation,—not without some considerable private love for Frederick; whom, if I were a Prussian, I would write about. We have been out nowhere, except one evening to Senior's to dinner; . . .

Robson is at the second Edition of *Sterling*, as you know; I have sent him three or four corrections, and take no further charge at all. The foolish people talk of this Book, as if it

were a great *new* thing! And possibly the *Times* Balderdash has shoved it faster abroad. For example, the other night a French able editor (he of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*) applies to me for a copy; also for a Portrait of myself, and even for some touches of authentic "Autobiography":—*ach Gott!* I bid Chapman send him the copy; but as to the rest, "Sorry to say Monsieur!"—I wish I were at another Book; that is all. . . .

LETTER 230

To the Same.

Chelsea, 28 November, 1851.

My dear Brother—. . . Jane goes to the Grange on Monday; I stay here by myself for about a fortnight, having pleaded *off* from going so soon: about the 13th, it is schemed, I am to go down, along with Twisleton, etc., and so be in at the last act.—I am *reading* Books about Frederick the Great, beyond doubt; but with no clear view yet of doing any good by writing of him: his being a *foreigner* is a grand drawback to such an enterprise. Last night Twisleton was here, and poor Saffi * who is busy reading your *Dante:* French talk, not of the best! Saffi is a very good creature, with much intelligence and modesty: Jane has got him a little teaching; for which he regards her as a friend in need. . . .

Yours ever,

T. Carlyle.

* One of the Roman triumvirs.

LETTER 231

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 4 December, 1851.

My dear good Mother—This is my Fifty-sixth Birthday; and I will write you a word, one word only, for I am tossed about terribly with business as usual. What a day for me; a day of many thoughts! Fifty-six years is a long time, dear Mother; but yet it is *short*, and no longer than a moment, to ETERNITY, which is the real date that all of us young and old belong to. We have had our share of toils and contradictions, sorrows enough each one of us: but has not the Great Father been GOOD to us too? Oh yes, Oh yes; never let us cease to acknowledge that; and let us trust always that in the boundless durations that are coming we may have the same experience. *Wrong* to one of us He cannot do. It will all be right, and blessed, and for *good* that He does. Let us rest *there;* other rest we have none! And so I welcome-in the new section of months granted us in our pilgrimage; and pray for God's blessing on us all. *Amen.*

This is much too solemn for so small a Note. I meant only to say I was well here in my solitude; and that Jane who went on Monday writes me encouragingly from the Grange. Poor little soul, she had a *gift* lying on my table this morning, just as if she had been here herself! I get ample *reading* in my solitude; have hardly spoken one word these three days, except to the Dog Nero. . . .

"A grand revolution in Paris," they say; but no news about it this morning. God bless you, dear Mother.

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 232

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

The Grange, 20 December, 1851.

My dear Brother—. . . We are going on well enough here, tho' not with any great enjoyment of ourselves, and certainly with perpetual small bother, owing to the change of all one's habits and ways. . . We have had Macaulay for two days: he was a real acquisition while he lasted, and gave rise to much good talk, besides an immense quantity of indifferent which he himself executed. A man of truly wonderful historical *memory*, which he has tried in really extensive reading, and has always lying ready, with this or the other fact, date or anecdote on demand: in other respects, constantly definable as the sublime of commonplace; not one of whose ideas has the least tincture of greatness or originality or any kind of superior merit except neatness of expression; *valde mediocris homo*. He speaks with a kind of *gowstering* [blustering] emphasis; laughs occasionally (*not* at things really ludicrous, but where a laugh is demanded by the exigencies of the case) with a loud wooden but frank and goodnatured tone:—he is on the whole a man of really peaceable kindly temper, and superior sincerity in his Whig way;—. . . I felt him really to be a loss when he went yesterday morning.*

* Writing to his sister the same day, Carlyle says: "Macaulay was here for two days,—another kind of greatness; not entirely stupendous either. He and I did very well together, however; and I felt his departure a real loss to the party. This celebrated man, tho' perhaps not worth the tenth part of the celebrating, is really a good sort of soul: grandson of a Highland Minister, and really very much (intrinsically) like a Highland Minister himself, tho' 'preaching' in a very different element, and with a stipend immensely enlarged!"

Many have gone, Ellice* (called "the Bear"), "Poodle Byng," Villiers, etc., and others have come and are coming: we are a fluctuating society here. Our grandest lights at present are Lords Lansdowne and Grey, with women pertaining to the latter; one Landseer, a little Painter, very goodhumored anecdotic little creature; Chancellors of the Exchequer and I know not whom are due to-day. Heigho! or as Graham has it better, "Oh whow!"— . . .

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 233

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 3 January, 1852.

My dear Brother—We got safe home yesterday afternoon, and I can wish you all a happy New Year from our own hearth again, which latter is a very pleasant accompanying circumstance. The little Dog Nero stood on his hind legs, full of exuberant joy, to receive us; and for me too there has been no such pleasant day for the last three weeks! Not that we had not many things to be interested in, to be glad of and proud of, in the scene where we were: but the environment and all its arrangements suited and always suits me so ill, I require to be fairly *out* of it before I can clearly taste what was really useful and worthy in it. Heigho! It seems to me the saddest of all lives,—and very many lives are sad enough in this epoch of the world! But it is ending, it will not continue long; that is something. Coming to the railway station, we met some 20 or 30 stout young men of those parts roaming about, having fallen out

* See *post*, p. 123.

of work; and farther on, about the Woking region, are 20 or 30 thousand acres of waste land, in good climate, on dry bottom, the whole of which are clearly reclaimable on good terms. But the rulers of the world hunt foxes, make bursts of parliamentary eloquence:—how *can* it ever come to good, all this!—Thackeray and his two girls were with us. . . . I had never seen him so well before. There is a great deal of talent in him, a great deal of sensibility,—irritability, sensuality, vanity without limit;—and nothing, or little, but sentimentalism and play-actorism to guide it all with: not a good or well-found ship in such waters on such a voyage. In the Train we came upon Milnes and his Wife, just returning from *Palmerston's*, the theme now of all tittle-tattle that has nothing else to play upon.* Milnes, himself looking fat and elderly, reported Palmerston to be "happy." . . .

LETTER 234

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 30 January, 1852.

My dear Mother— . . . Our weather is quite wet and changeable; otherwise all is well enough with us,—Jane even speaks of renewing her habit of a *morning walk.*

At present poor Nero has to be content with my company at that hour: the poor little *tatty* wretch, coursing after sparrows which he never catches,—eager as a Californian *Digger*, and probably about as successful, often makes me reflect, and rather entertains me, in the Kensington field-lanes.

* Lord Palmerston, on Lord Russell's advice, had been dismissed in December from the office of Foreign Secretary because of his interference in French home affairs. He was succeeded by Earl Granville.

We do not in the least participate in the terror of the [French] *Invasion*, which at present rages here. Two days ago the Bishop Thirlwall (ask John) came upon me, full of almost frantic apprehensions on that score, and went thro' the Parks, etc., reasoning with me on the subject, and quite "astounded" (he said) at my indifference. I maintained that there was yet hardly the shadow of a probability; and, except for a temporary insult to our coasts, there was not, and could not soon be, even a possibility; and that, on the whole, if we had to bestir ourselves, out of the abominable *Hudsonism* and rotten canting confusion now everywhere prevalent, and fight for ourselves like men or be slaughtered as fat swine, it probably would be a great advantage to us at the end of the account!—The Bishop could not be converted to my opinion, all at once; but seemed to take some comfort from it nevertheless. . . .

LETTER 235

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 23 February, 1852.

My dear Brother— . . . We were at dinner on Friday night with one Ellice in Arlington Street (a wide-flowing old Canadian Scotchman, Politician, Negotiator, etc., etc., called "Bear Ellice" in society here, but rather for his *oiliness* than any trace of ferocity ever seen in him): Thiers, the Ashburtons, Thackeray, etc., etc., were there, and much confused talk, in bad French and otherwise,—it was just at the time when Palmerston was beating the Ministry, and Notes, etc., came in from the Clubhouses; a rather sad evening amid all the levity that was

going on! *Monsieur,* I said to Thiers, who is a goodhumoured little body, but without talents except small and rather contemptible ones, *Monsieur, nous, aussi vous, cheminons à grands pas vers notre Louis Napoléon; quelque Cromwell Second, qui jetera tout cela dans la rivière. Partout la "Constitution" tire à sa fin!* The little man was not much edified by the remark: and in general my seriousness was matter only of amusement to the old stagers. I myself cannot be amused at the things I see.

All people are buzzing about now with the tidings of the new Derby-Disraeli Ministry: Lord Derby (late Stanley) to be at the top; Sir Strafford Canning (home from Constantinople) Foreign Secretary;* the Jew Disraeli Home ditto, etc., etc.: of Disraeli's coming in nobody seems to make a doubt; "if not Home Secretary, then perhaps even Board of Control" (which means King of India for the time).—I must say, Here is a Stump-Orator who has not gone to the wrong market with his beggarly "Old Clo'" dyed new! Such are our portents. "It is the hour and the power of *Darkness,*" as Abbot Samson said: "*Videat Altissimus.*" Amen.

I still keep reading about Frederick the Great,—dull and dreadful Books (*Voigt* on the Teutsch Ritterthum, *nine* fearful volumes; Mirabeau, etc., etc.); but the subject does not the least grow lovelier to me; nor will, I think. It has at any rate the advantage of keeping me *silent,* and busy in thought with many problems and inquiries.— . . .

* Earl of Malmsbury became Foreign Secretary; and Disraeli Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the Derby Ministry of 1852.

LETTER 236

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 20 March, 1852.

Dear Jean— . . . There has been nothing passing here, that was of interest to us; tho' Ministries have changed, etc., etc. The prevalence of Eastwind (the disagreeablest weather I can recollect for a long time, and really unfavourable to health for thin skins) was a much more important fact for us. Lady Derby (the Premier's Wife) intends, it would appear, a great turn out in *her* way on the last evening of the month, and has sent me a card among others: I really am not quite sure but I shall go for a few minutes, and see what the "scoonerils"* are like! But I doubt that is not probable either.—Nobody expects much, or fears anything, of this Derby *go:* the fact that poor English Toryism is obliged to depend on the *tongue* of a base Venetian Jew (who has nothing else but a glib tongue, with a brass face and heart) speaks eloquently as to *it* and some other things! On the whole, we had better not think of all that; the less we think, the quieter our humour will likely be.

I keep reading still about Frederick the Great of Prussia, but without making almost any true progress towards understanding him or his affairs. Partly I cannot get the *right* Books here: even when I send for them, at my own charges, the *delay* is quite overpowering (as experience shows), and before the Book arrive, you will have helped yourself otherwise, and fallen out of conceit with it. We sometimes talk of quite lifting anchor,

* Annandale pronunciation of scoundrels.

and going *over* thither (Jane and I) for a six months: but this is *quite a secret*, observe. The *worst* is, however, I do not care rightly about the subject; do not *kindle* readily now about it or any other subject. That is the chief fruit I yet trace of rapidly advancing years,—a thing to be looked for, along with worse things which have wonderfully hitherto been spared me, at this stage of my history. . . .

LETTER 237

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 10 April, 1852.

My dear Mother— . . . To-night there is a small Tea-party coming; a certain Lady Stanley (an old friend, from Cheshire) wishing to meet Thomas Erskine;—heigho, there will little come of that, I apprehend! But Thomas is always good, and pleasant to see; the Lady also, still considerably beautiful, is always full of vivacity and good humour.—Robert Chambers called on us yesterday; a fat, cheerfully obstinate-looking, prosperous, and not at all unpleasant man. One night we were at a big soirée at Milnes's (ask John) and his new Wife's: very hot, very noisy, to me thoroughly wearisome: I saw the face of Palmerston there,—not quite unlike that of the late *Walter Hogg* (rough puckery skin, small bloodshot cruel eyes),—otherwise a tall man, with some air of greediness and cunning; and a curious fixed *smile* as if lying not at the top but at the bottom of his physiognomy: . . . for the rest, stout and straight, tho' now in the seventies, I believe. We had dined, the foregoing night, at the Ashburtons': that is the extent of our gaieties this season.—Here is a Note from Dickens which may amuse you

for a minute: the Second Number of his new dud of a Book* (I have not yet read the First Number) had not come; Jane made me write for it,—I too value a little the friendly feeling of the man. . . .

Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 238

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 10 May, 1852.

Dear Brother— . . . Poor Jones, I doubt has little chance of advantage from this Library revolution; and on the whole the affair is threatening to take a quite ominous and reprehensible course. Not being able to go myself to committee, I sent Jane to communicate my notions to Forster: namely that Jones should be made interim manager; that first of all a thorough examination and illumination of the Library's *condition*, from the very heart to the surface of it, should be had,—whereby we might know what *kind* of Librarian might now be the best for us;—and that not till after that should any Election, or movement towards an Election, be made by any one of us. Forster as I knew he would, patronised all these salutary notions, ready to swear for them on Koran if needful; but at the same time said, there was not the least hope of getting them carried; or any thing but *one* carried, viz.: the Election of Gladstone's Neapolitan,†—which Gladstone and his Helpers "were stirring Heaven and Earth" to bring about; and which from the present composition of the committee (Milman, Lyttelton,

* Bleak House. † Signor Lakaita.

Milnes, Hallam, etc., a clear majority of malleable material, some of it as soft as butter, under the hammer of a Minister *in posse*), they were "perfectly certain" to do. With this answer Jane returned; quite of Forster's way of thinking:—I had bid her signify to Jones in some kind way that he must not pretend at all to be head Librarian, in case there were one, tho' his deserts were known and would be attended to in time and place: this she had no opportunity of telling him, such a bustle was there. What they did at the committee I have not at all heard: Forster (who has a cold too) has fled out of Town for a week. Gladstone, I think with Forster, will probably succeed: but he shall not do it without one man at least insisting on having Reason and common Honesty as well as Gladstone and Charity at other men's expense, satisfied in the matter; and protesting to a plainly audible extent against the *latter* amiable couple walking over the belly of the former.—Such protest I am already bound to; and that, I believe, will prove to be all that I can do. Of Gladstone's Neapolitan no man, Italian or other, has heard the name before: from Gladstone's own account to me, I figured him as some ingenious bookish young advocate, who probably had helped Gladstone in his Pamphlets underhand,—a useful service, but not done to the London Library particularly. . . .

LETTER 239

To John Forster, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Chelsea, 12 May, 1852.

Dear Forster—This project of Gladstone's must be resisted *à l'outrance:* I find also that there are "possibilities" (in spite

of your evil prognostics), and if there were not, that such must be *made*, and prosecuted with energy and without delay. The Committee (of which every one of *us* is a constituent atom) has no more right to do this thing, than your Henry would have, if you sent him for a cut of salmon, to buy it, with your money, of some meritorious Fishmonger (Neapolitan or other) who had a cut *extremely in need of being sold*. With what face would Henry present malodorous salmon to you: and brag of his "charity," done at your expense! This seems to me the exact position we occupy, whether we recognise it or not; and we, each of us, shall intrinsically deserve horsewhipping if we play false to it,—and don't bring home simply the *best salmon* we can find. . . . We are called each honest Henry of us to resist to the death. . . .

LETTER 240

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 14 June, 1852.

My dear Brother—. . . On Saturday we had a tough business, electing our Librarian. Gladstone, with Bunsen and Lyttelton and Lansdowne to back, made due appearance and had all along been very diligent and eager for his Neapolitan Signor of merit. There were twenty-two of us in all,—eleven candidates still left on the list, above two hundred had been thrown over as a preliminary:—speeches were spoken, manœuvring went on; finally I advised that we should go to vote, as we "were not convincing one another,"—tho' all manner of real politeness, candour and delicate management was going on: President Lord Devon, an accomplished old stager, took

the written votes, counted them out amid considerable stillness: "For Donne 18, for Lakaita (the Signor of merit) 4"; —after which we departed, most of us with mutual congratulations. A vote was adopted too of general esteem for Jones, and recognition of our obligation to do something for him in the way of permanent promotion, were Donne once on the ground. Donne a friend of Spedding, Milnes, etc., a scholar of distinction, capital "man of business" (they say), and small Norfolk Squire who,—even the Justices of the Peace, love him,—appears to be, if *testimony* can be credited, little short of an "admirable Crichton," fit to be the envy of surrounding Libraries; but we shall see better what stuff is really in him, when once he takes his work in hand!—. . .

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 241

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 19 June, 1852.

Dear Brother—. . . You can send the *Charles V.* to Dumfries, when there is an opportunity, if nobody wants to read it at Scotsbrig. I fear my Mother will not be able to stand it? I have not yet announced it at Dumfries; so of course they are *not* in a hurry for it. The last Volume of *Chalmers** will stand a good deal of reading! I had a very kind Note from Hanna in answer to some words of thanks I wrote for it. *Margaret Fuller*† will perhaps amuse you here and there, tho' it is dreadfully longwinded and indistinct,—as if one were telling

* "Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers," by Wm. Hanna, D.D.

† Autobiography of Margaret Fuller, with Memoirs by Emerson, Clarke, and Channing.

the story not in words, but in *symbolical* tunes on the bagpipe!—We got *Jeffrey's Life* * too, which is readable (and little more), but somebody has it out on loan this while, and we wait for another opportunity.

. . . Last night, at the Ashburtons', I saw the (expelled) Duke of Holstein-Augustenburg, a mournful tall lean princely man, *son* of him who gave Schiller the pension: he has come over here to look after his shattered affairs (I suppose),—some £12,000 a year has been appointed him (by Downing Street) in lieu of *all* claims and possessions, with banishment from Holstein superadded; and they don't *pay* him the £12,000, it appears, or make any sign of doing it. We had to speak French, or I should have got some real good of his talk, which is much more rational and serious than that of English persons of rank (or not of rank) in general. We have a speculation here about taking a *long* lease of this House, and building a new *Storey* on the top of it,—by way of getting a matchless study-room there, lighted from the roof, and perfectly *free* of noise and some other nuisances! There is some considerable likelihood of getting this fairly set about;—but I will tell you more upon it when there is more time. . . .

LETTER 242

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 8 July, 1852.

My dear Brother—We are in a furious uproar here, nothing but bricklayers, dust and tumult over all the house; a "thor-

* By Lord Cockburn.

ough repair" going actually on! I am banished up to my little dressing-closet here, behind the bedroom; here stands my desk, with a few books; the *rest* are all now mere *stacks* of books, or pinned in their shelves with curtains, to keep off the unspeakable dust: it is truly a hot case we are in. For, besides there has come a blazing heat (physically speaking too) within these four days, very horrible for human creatures among bricks; and if thunder and rain don't come soon, it will be bad times with us, I perceive. Meanwhile it is not quite so unendurable as I expected; I have off all the carpets here; I keep a watering-pot beside me, and fearlessly moisten both floors and walls; so that with windows down, and plenty of wind blowing, and almost no clothes at all, I contrive to get along. Want of sleep is the worst; but it raises us at a far thriftier hour, and makes a nice long day, for one thing,—so is not without its advantages too.

The chief "repairs" contemplated are an enlargement of the Library,—conversion of the Library into a kind of Drawing room, according to the modern ideas. They are taking back the fireplace (*two feet* of that great tower of brickwork are gone out of the way); new proper windows with a great increase of light; lastly three feet additional width to be taken off Jane's bedroom,—Jane will shift to the top front room, which used to be yours, which, with this of mine, she has undertaken to make "very handsome." We are also to get water into the house, etc., etc. There will remain always behind the Drawing room, a *guest's bedroom*, tho' contracted in size,—where we hope to see you one day, our first guest in it if we are in luck!—. . . We have got a "lease of 31 years," and fair basis for changing the house into our own image as nearly as it will come: so

En avant! The place too is very cheap:* and on the present terms (whatever become of *us*) an outlay of £200 or £250 is considered a perfectly safe investment. . . .

Same evening, 7 P. M.—We went to Twisleton's, by appointment, to see some Puritan Portraits; especially two Portraits, one of Oliver by Walker (genuine, but of no great worth), another, or rather three others, at different ages, of Old Subtlety, Lord Say and Sele, ancestor of the said Twisleton. . . Twisleton, by the way, has just returned from a *third* voyage to America; and this time, has brought a little Wife with him, whom he went for about the beginning of May! She is a black-eyed lively little creature, with abundant spirit, clever and rather eager to shew that she is; has money, I believe, as Twisleton has; was called *Dwight*, and belonged to the *haute volée* of that Boston community. He is now in his Brother's house,—the Lord Say and Sele that now is,—and the Pictures, etc., are only "his" for ten days longer. A very good man of his kind; and abundantly happy his little Dame and he appear: they are for Italy in Winter. Good luck to them! . . .

LETTER 243

To Dr. Carlyle, Moffat.

Scotsbrig, 18 August, 1852.

Dear Brother—. . . Thanks for the German details; I believe I shall be *obliged* to go, there seems no honourable getting off from it;—Saturday come a week, I must sail, and see the matter to some kind of end! But the outlook of sleepless

* The rent was £35 *per annum*.

nights, of wearisome fatiguing dreary days, and toil at once and ennui, to little visible purpose: all this fills me with a kind of horror. For one thing, however, I may take all my luggage with me, provided you *bring* a big enough portmanteau. . . .

I think I told you I *had* written to Neuberg, in a dubitating, not-consenting, yet not-denying tone? . . .

LETTER 244

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Hôtel des Pays Bas, Rotterdam, 1 September, 1852.

My dear Brother—Take this shortest of Letters, to save my poor Mother from her anxieties: I have not time to write except a word to Neuberg, Jane and you;—the minutes are nearly all gone now.

. . . Our voyage lasted, instead of 36 hours as you guessed, upwards of 80,—namely till this morning at noon (Tuesday, 7 P. M., is the date now); one of the most uncomfortable pitching, tumbling, tedious and dreary voyages I ever made. However, it is all over now, and I hope to get a sleep in this fine clean Inn to-night, and have already had some Christian dinner:—and to-morrow morning at 6, I take the Düsseldorf steamer; sleep somewhere (*any-where* I have the choice) on the road; and next day on arriving at Düsseldorf, take the rail to Bonn, and so arrive there *Thursday*. I have written to Neuberg, whose Street and number I now have. That is hitherto my history. . . .

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 245

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Berlin, 3 October, 1852.

My dear Brother—. . . This is now the fourth evening since we got to Berlin,—by a circuitous and painful route, due to the great Fritz and his Battlefields;—and now at length I propose to give a more deliberate little word than I could write in Weimar, in Bonn or Rotterdam, about my travelling experiences. A short word; but one that will be welcome to my good old Mother and the rest of you.

Weimar, from which, if I recollect rightly, my last Letter was dated, proved to be a laborious agitating place, and detained us three days in all, which were, if not pleasant by any means, yet very strange, and will long be memorable to me. The *third* day was added partly or wholly by accident: the reigning Powers having heard of our existence somehow, proposed a Dinner, and we could not decline; but *went*,—to Belvedere of the Weimarese,—and witnessed one of the loftiest pieces of Histrionism off the Stage; not to be repeated in a hurry! The old Grand Duchess (young Duke and Wife were in Italy) is the Sister of the Russian Czar; quick-witted, courteous, rather deaf, and for the rest all made of hard French-polish into the very heart:—positively I have not yet got my mind made up about that phenomenon in general, and feel only as yet that it was in the highest degree *tragic*. Schiller's house and Goethe's; and the thought that their lives had lain in such a scene made the matter worse and worse. Weimar is quite a little spiritual puzzle to me.—At Dresden we found Bölte and other Sages and

Dilettanti, English and Foreign; and ran about, "like mad," seeking information and getting next to none; at length we climbed to the top of the highest Church steeple, and at least *saw* with our eyes what kind of scene it was we had got into. A beautiful old city; but quite faded and reduced; evidently going back in the world, and wearing, like Bath, the air of a decayed beau,—stately, poor, with lace tarnished and purse grown light. I saw where Frederick *had been* however,—if that can do any good to me, I have acquired that. Of Lobositz, Töplitz and the Bohemian Border regions, still more of the "Saxon Switzerland," I will say nothing at all,—tho' this Lobositz adventure cost us two days beyond calculation, and some of the queerest experiences we had yet had in Germany. Zittau at length again connected us with *railways;* we went thro' Hernhutt (four hours there), thro' Frankfurt on the Oder (one day there and on the field of Cunersdorf,—compared with which *Creca Moss* is as the Carse of Gowrie): finally to *Berlin* itself, as I said;—and properly to within sight of the *end* of these sad wanderings. For after a few days spent here, the best I can, which will not be very *well,* I have all along intended and do still intend to *rush* directly home, and try for a little rest at Chelsea after all these sublime sights I have had! Heigho, *Oh Whow!** I declare I am terribly wearied, for one thing: and repose, under the humblest circumstances, will be of all things the desirablest to me. I have seen Potsdam, Sans Souci, etc., etc., am seeing and doing what I can; and profess only to hope that, in a week or so, I may be under way again, with my nose homeward. . . .

. . . I suppose I *have* gained something, were the handful

* W. Graham of Burnswark's too frequent ejaculation.

of wheat once separated from the mountain of chaff: at all events I have *done* the thing; and it will not start up with promise, in my own eyes, or those of others, inviting me to do it again. The German *beds* especially are quite a new experience in life to a thin-skinned sleeper! Were I to live a thousand years, I should hardly forget these miraculous machines I think; and all Christian beds shall henceforth be dearer to me, and honourable, however humble, on their account!—

. . . . . .

Berlin, a big noisy city (kind of cross between Paris and an immense congeries of Maltkilns set in rows, for the streets are mean, low and the houses have no chimneys), has yet yielded me almost nothing; sight of a few portraits at best; but I have now (by the Ambassador Bloomfield's aid) admittance to use the Library Books *at home*, etc., etc.; and hope, with effort, to get a little better on. Varnhagen has been to me and I have returned his call; but in him is no help at all: a lively-talking, pleasant, *official* kind of man; I understand every word of his German, and feel with regret how little it can do for me. Poor fellow, he is ten years older than myself; and has had many slaps too; for the rest, a *rüstigeralter Kerl* [very vigorous old fellow], with cunning grey eyes, turn-up nose, plenty of white hair, and a dash of dandy, soldier-citizen and Sage (or, if you had ever seen the men *both*, a mixture of Stewart Lewis and Leigh Hunt): that is Varnhagen; and he goes to some Miss Something's soirée every night,—whither I would never follow him, and "don't intend to." T. Carlyle.

. . . . . .

Poor Mrs. Macready is dead, Jane will have already written to you: I am *wae* indeed to hear it.

LETTER 246

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

The Grange, Hants, 23 October, 1852.

My dear Mother— . . . Our weather in general is sunny and very pleasant; quite *warm* this morning, tho' the trees are all red, and many leaves are falling when the wind blows. There is an immense assemblage of rooks (honest *crows*) around the mansion here; their hoarse melody is often the first thing I hear in the morning; and at all times it invites me to pensive reflections, and remembrances of poor old Ecclefechan and Hoddam woods where I first heard such sounds in days that are now a very great way behind me. The flight of the "craws"; far up in the sky, over Ecclefechan village, on summer evenings, towards their home in Woodcockair, is one of the pleasantest things I recollect out of early childhood, and along with it so many persons whom I shall not see again in this world! Time, Eternity—God make us *equal* to these great facts, which lie in the life of every man!—

There is nothing to be sent you *hence*, dear Mother, in the shape of news; little happens that is of moment, and nothing that could be interesting so far away as Annandale. We are a shifting, not very numerous party in this house; "agreeable," that is the first law; but not otherwise doing or saying important things. The new American Ambassador * (a lawyer from Philadelphia) was here the other day; he staid two nights; had his pretty Niece and another pair of Americans with him: he

* Mr. James Buchanan, afterwards President of the United States.

looked *like Ker the clockmaker grown oldish;* really a most mechanic-looking, tho' rather clever man; and he bustled about, as Jane said, "like a man with his pockets full of hot cinders":—we took kind leave of him; but did not shed many tears when he went. Thackeray is coming, for whom I care nothing, tho' he is a clever and friendly man; he comes to-day with a nobleman and a Portrait-Painter; comes, but is soon to go:—"Di tha naither ill na' guid!"—. . .

LETTER 247

To G. Remington, 6 Cheyne Row.

Chelsea, 12 November, 1852.

Dear Sir—It is with great reluctance that I venture to trouble you in any way; but a kind of necessity compels me; and I trust your good nature will excuse it in a distressed neighbour.

We have the misfortune to be people of weak health in this house; bad sleepers in particular; and exceedingly sensible in the night hours to disturbances from sound. On your premises for some time past there is a Cock, by no means particularly loud or discordant; whose crowing would of course be indifferent or insignificant to persons of sound health and nerves; but, alas, it often enough keeps us unwillingly awake here, and on the whole gives a degree of annoyance which, except to the unhealthy, is not easily conceivable.

If you would have the goodness to remove that small animal or in any way render him inaudible from midnight to breakfast time, such charity would work a notable relief to certain

persons here, and be thankfully acknowledged by them as an act of good neighbourship.*

With many apologies, and neighbourly respects,

I remain, Yours sincerely,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 248

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 8 December, 1852.

My dear Mother— . . . We have got established in the old train here, and are going on as softly as possible. Jane has left all her colds at the Grange; and roves out as heretofore, daily with the little dog at her heel; . . . I am reading books as before; very uncertain yet when or how I shall get a stroke at writing again! I must try, try, and be at once patient and diligent. A poor fellow called Eliot Warburton, a writer of some note, whom I knew a little of, and had a note from while at the Grange, set off, on the very day of our return, in a Steamer called the *Amazon*, for Mexico, etc., about which I suppose he meant to make a Book: alas, news is already here that the Steamer took fire, near the Scilly Islands, and that of 160 souls only 21 escaped, of whom he is not one! His poor Widow and children (in an expensive house and without resource) have a terrible sorrow in these days!—Twisleton (whom the Doctor knows) told us this news yesternight, having come down for an hour or two,—not quite bad company, he. Another evening Cooper the Chartist came by appointment; a man not beautiful,

* Carlyle's request was immediately and politely complied with by Mr. Remington.

"a tiger marked with smallpox," but possessed of honest sense too: he told us that Maurice's Tailors were all going to sixes and sevens. Enough, enough!—Dear good Mother, I hope you will get Jack to write before long that you are still in your usual way; a weak but patient and cheerful Mother to us in these dark winter days. May God's blessing be on you always,—

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 249

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 19 December, 1852.

My dear good Mother— . . . I have got now upon a little bit of work, suitable to my confused condition and mood,—a kind of *Translation* relating to Frederick,* which I can work at steadily in any humour; and for the last week I am busy indeed! It will last me about another eight days or more; and by that time, I shall perhaps see better ahead a little. Who knows? At any rate this thing needed to be done; and the doing of it is a noticeable contentment to me.

. . . Our scandalous Protection Ministry,† we rejoice to know, is gone again! It was turned out on Friday (or rather Thursday night); and the Whigs are now trying to form a "Coalition," etc.: tho' nothing is settled yet. Whatever they form, it will hardly be so ugly as that Jew adventurer‡ was,—"lineal descendant of the Impenitent Thief," as O'Connell once

* "A Day with Frederick."
† Lord Derby's.
‡ Disraeli.

called him!—About all that, however, I really care but little; we stay very solitary here, and try to mind our own work. . . .

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 250

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 23 December, 1852.

My dear Sister— . . . "Frederick the Great" continues very questionable: nobody yet could say, I should ever fairly *try* to write a Book about him! The sight of actual Germany, with its flat-soled puddlings in the slough of nonsense (quite a different kind of nonsense from ours, but not a whit less genuine) has hurt poor *Fritz* (Freddy) very much in my mind; poor fellow, he too lies deep-buried in the *middenstank* even as Cromwell did; and then he is not half or tenth-part such a man as Cromwell, that one should swim and dive for him in that manner! In fact tho' I have not yet quitted the neighbourhood of Fritz and his old cocked-hat, his fate is very uncertain with me; and every new German *Book* I read about him, my feeling is, All up with Fritz. In Germany I could not even get a good Portrait of him,—tho' they spend the year round in singing dull insincere praises to him in every key; and have built a huge bronze and granite monument to him, in Berlin, as big as your Midsteeple, at the cost of perhaps half a million, which is worth next to nothing [*Letter torn*]. They have the mask of his dead face, however; a fiercely shrivelled plaster cast; lips and chin and bottom of the nose I recollect as perfectly the image of old —— ——, if you remember her, in those features! The face of a *lean lion*, or else partly; alas! of a ditto *cat!* The

lips are thin, and closed like pincers; a face that never yielded;—not the beautifullest kind of face. In fine why should *I* torment my domestic soul writing his foreign history? He may go to France for me!

All people are getting ready their Christmas eatables here; determined upon doing a stroke of work that way. Such walls of beef, such wildernesses of plucked turkeys, eyes never saw: "all from the country, ma'am!" The poor people, who cannot buy, stand in crowds in speechless approval and generous admiration of those who can. . . . Likewise all the world is busy baking a new Ministry; which is to be laid upon the peel, and go into the oven, they say, this very night. A "Coalition" of Whigs and Grahamites, or I know not what: not good, but compared with the late Derby swindle, and *its* abominable Stump-Orator and "Impenitent Thief," it will be lovely for a season, and a relief to all eyes! Poor Protectionists, there never were men so "sold," since Judas concluded his trade. *This* Jew however will not hang himself; no, I calculate he has a great deal more of evil work to do in the world yet, if he live. Whatever brutish Infatuation has money in its purse, votes in its pocket, and no tongue in its head, here is the man to be a tongue for it (rather than be *nothing*, which *is* his function, could he believe it) and to use all his "fine intellect" to put words in its mouth. In fact, he is not a beautiful man to me at all, that one;—and so we will leave him, in a plight, for the present, that is rather suitable to him. . . .

Poor old M'Diarmid,* we shall see him no more, then! The day is drawing down (with the generation I belong to), and the tired labourers, one by one, are going *home*. There is rest *there*,

* Editor of the *Dumfries Courier*.

I believe, for those who could never find any before. God is great, God is good. . . .

Your affectionate Brother,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 251

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 13 February, 1853.

My dear Mother— . . . I keep struggling away amongst my books; irksome enough drudgery of various poor sorts; but I hope I am scraping soil together to "big the dyke with," one day! Jane also seems a little better in the *sleep* department, and otherwise does not complain. She has been in much anxiety this day or two about Mazzini and his mad "insurrection at Milan" (concerning which I sent you a Newspaper the other day): a very mad "insurrection"; but a man really of much worth in spite of all that,—and who probably could not *help* its taking place, as matters stood. If the Austrians could catch him, they would willingly give a big "town of land" for the prize, and shoot him down like a mad dog: but they cannot quite; and that too is a kind of comfort. We learn this morning that the "Insurrection" is quite suppressed and gone to pot; but that Mazzini himself is "in safety." Let him continue so!

The other day I took a long walk into the country to look after a poor Scotchman called Maccall, who is in very bad case just now. A man of much faculty; bred originally for preaching, and who *has* had congregations, twice, in England, but could not get on with them (owing to his own honesty, ardour, etc., but also to his own *pride*, I think); wherefore some seven or

eight years ago he gave up preaching altogether, and has been in London, with Wife and one child, trying to "live by his pen." At last he is broken down in health,—frightful shattering of the nerves,—and one knows not what to do with him! I found him, that day, gone into the country (to some friends), and not there; his wife, a fine cleanly hardy Lancashire little woman, pleased me much with her air of quiet steady courage:—and I left the poor cottage with many sorrowful and yet respectful reflections in my mind. Jane *begs*, from some of her rich friends, for poor Maccall. He is a good man too, and high, tho' too *lean*,—and harsh-edged, as a rusty *lipped* * razor!

Ever your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 252

To Dr. Carlyle, Moffat.

Chelsea, 10 March, 1853.

My dear Brother— . . . I begin to *try* more seriously to get something gradually brought to paper, in this sad affair of Fritz; that I may see at least, afar off, some possibility of a deliverance from it. *Cosa fatta ha capo;* or, as I translate it, A thing that will end must begin! Nothing can be worse than my progress; nor can I get any material or Book, that is other than abominable to the intellect of man: however, however——. . .

The Ashburtons lately have done unexpectedly a really handsome thing to me. Lord Ashburton is on the committee of the Athenæum Club; he said once, Shall I propose you, this spring, for *immediate* election? I answered grumblingly,

* Hacked.

vaguely; Lady Ashburton quizzed; and so we came to the clear result, "No," and I dismissed the matter altogether. But now the other day, comes news that I *am* elected, the money all *paid,* entrance money and subscription in a lump; and that I have only to go in when I like and stay out when I like! Really very kind; and so handsomely done that there was no rejecting or refusing it. Lord Ashburton took me the other night to my first dinner and entrance there: I do not much believe I shall go *often;* but that will be seen. Old Crabbe Robinson, visible in the reading room, inquired after you that night: very old, and *clattery.* Darwin, Owen, etc., were also visible: plenty of loungers there, if one wanted lounging!

Adieu dear Brother. . . . Our best regards to Sister Phœbe.* Yours ever,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 253

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Chelsea, 8 April, 1853.

My dear Brother—Here is a little Package, which is intrinsically worth nothing, but which will be welcome to you nevertheless. One of the inventions of these times, that of taking Portraits by the light of the sun, is no doubt common in your neighbourhood as it is in ours: a particular form of it called *Talbotype,* has lately come into the hands of the general public here; and one of our acquaintances (Anthony Sterling, a man rich and idle) amuses himself, as various people do, with taking

* Dr. Carlyle had married, in the autumn of last year, a widowed lady (Mrs. Phœbe Watt), and was now living in his own house at Moffat, Dumfriesshire.

likenesses by that method. Here are two of his best specimens; at least the two which, I am well sure, *you* will like *best.* Mine was not originally done by him, but has been copied successfully by him, as you here see: Jane's I do not think nearly so good; but it also is a tolerable likeness, and of course faithful so far as it goes. You can keep the poor scraps, if they come safe to you, under some kind of cheap frame, or safe anywhere from *dust* and *damp* (these are the two elements hostile to them); and now and then they will give you remembrances of those by whom you never can be forgotten, and who otherwise do not fear that you ever will forget them. Alas, alas! . . . In your last letter to Graham of Burnswark, I noticed, you talked of "eyesight": did I ever tell you that I too use spectacles at night, for a year or two past; and feel myself indeed growing very old. What is notable I have not yet lost much of my *strength,* perhaps little in any sense, but I feel a dreadful increase of *laziness* in all senses. . . . In fact nothing but the sting of conscience, and much internal misery, or else a plain outward necessity, can make me "rise," or get into a right red heat of effort any more. How much more insignificant all earthly things become, as one approaches day by day the "earnest portal!" Courage, my Brother; God is above us, the Good and Just reigns to all Eternity, and He only. . . .

LETTER 254

To Dr. Carlyle, Moffat.

Chelsea, 15 April, 1853.

My dear Brother—. . . I am at present on some negotiation for admission to the inner rooms of the Museum: but

Panizzi, who can himself do nothing, is not encouraging; to-morrow I am to see Hallam, and unless he give me some heart (which the good old soul will if he can), I shall quietly let the matter drop. After all, *Books* are not what will make me rise; it is astonishing what little *profit*, in any form whatever, one too often gets out of Books! With Prussian Books on Friedrich, for example, one might load a waggon; and the knowledge even Prussians have of Friedrich I find to be frightfully like *zero*, in spite of Books. Not one *genial* Book yet exists on the subject.

. . . Do you read the *Edinburgh Review?* In the last No. is a scourging Article (of which I read three pages to-day in the Library) on *Disraeli*,—by Hayward. Diamond cut diamond; Jew pull the dirty ragged pate of Jew! I agree with Hayward, however, there is hardly any uglier phenomenon in these times than the political history of that uncircumcised (or circumcised) Adventurer.—I saw nothing else in the Review; but had heard the review of *Alison* was by one Greg, a writing Hodman of some name, once a cottonspinner of ditto. George Cornewall Lewis, dullest of learned mortals, is now Editor,—more power to his elbow. I read hardly a page of any book or any pamphlet, but what turns on my own sad subject: I have enough of dulness steadily awaiting me of its own accord there. I have mostly given up the *Leader* Newspaper, it had got so utterly washy and frothy; the *Examiner*, which we get instead, is not a lively or inspired production, not it either! But one finds old Crawford, etc., in it; and one does not find August Comte, the spirit-rappers, Holyoake and that sad *etcetera*. . . .

LETTER 255

To Dr. Carlyle, Moffat.

Chelsea, 20 May, 1853.

My dear Brother—. . . My difficulties with *Frederick* are two: first, the vague *shoreless* nature of the subject, which has been treated hitherto by hardly any man of superior understanding, and lies "like water spilt upon the ground" (hardly to be gathered up here at Chelsea, I doubt): second, what is still worse, the want of sufficient *Love* for lean Frederick and his heroisms, on my part,—which is a sad objection indeed! Only pain can now *drive* me through the subject; *led* and induced through it I shall never be. I tremble at the thought of such "drivings" as I have known before now.

Bosworth (215 Regent Street) applied for leave to reprint in *Railway* form some of my Essays; answer from Chapman, "No,"—but determination by Chapman now to do it himself at last. "Biographical Essays"; about ten of them in all; beginning with *Johnson,* which I have now got, and am correcting for the shilling-pamphlet artists. Three thousand copies, and to me £20 for each shilling-pamphlet: fair enough on the money side. Bosworth, at present, wants to print the "Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question" (to astonish the *Uncle-Tommery* a little); but that I find questionable hitherto, —the Piece itself (as I see to-day) is very imperfect, in parts bad; and the "cry of stuck pigs" which is sure to follow from it (and is not a musical thing) will be great. I doubt, I doubt. —Jeffs the Foreign Bookseller "applies for an interview";

some French Publisher intends a Translation of *French Revolution a History:* very well,—if he can find a French Translator! I have appointed Jeffs to-morrow at 3. These are bits of events; these, in the day of small things. . . .

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 256

To Dr. Carlyle.

Chelsea, 13 June, 1853.

My dear Brother—. . . Mazzini, home safe from his mad adventure, was quite cheerful, gay and amusing; and did not seem in the least conscious of what a poor figure he had cut in the eyes of all rational onlookers, or how much he had lost in men's esteem here by such a pitiful "Revolution" *à la Donnybrook.* He stays constantly in a circle of ——, etc.; and, I conjecture, is glad to be worshipped in that circle, without inquiring too strictly *what* circle it is! I find less of the "*Martyr*" in him, a good deal, ever since he made that *Triumvirate* appearance on the stage; and more of the man "*starring* it in the provinces";—in fact he seems to me a happier, also pleasanter, but by no means to grow a wiser man; . . .

For the present, we have (occasionally) a Yankee Lady,* sent by Emerson, who has discovered that the "*Man* Shakespear" is a *Myth,* and did *not* write those Plays which bear his name, which were on the contrary written by a "Secret Association" (names *unknown*): she has actually come to England for the purpose of examining that, and if possible, proving it, from the British Museum and other sources of evidence. *Ach Gott!*—. . .

* Miss Delia Bacon.

LETTER 257

To Dr. Carlyle, Moffat.

Chelsea, 27 June, 1853.

My dear Brother—I got your last Letter duly; and, as you may believe, it has been often in my thoughts since. Alas, alas! The thing that I have feared, all my life ever since consciousness arose in me, is now inevitably not distant. I gather from your softened expressions, how very weak my poor Mother is; how unlikely you think it that she should be spared to us much longer. No sterner thought ever fixed itself in my mind; —there it dwells ever since your Letter came: and why should I *attempt* to put it away! The Past is now all that we have; in the Future there *can* be rationally no store of hope for us. Ah me, ah me!—Really one of my chief comforts at present is the thought that you are near my good and dear old Mother; that nothing which *can* be done for her solace and alleviation is or will be omitted by you. I am very weak here, far away, and as good as able to do nothing. I calculate that, if I live much longer, I shall weep once more in this world, and probably but *once*, however long I live! But we must not dwell on that either; we must take the blessed and heavenly element along with us that lies in this sadness too; and, on the whole, "trust in God," as our dear Mother would say,—even so, "trust in God" for all that lies ahead of us in Time, and in the Eternities that are beyond Time.—

. . . Jane is on the eve of going off to you; will go this week, she says; day not fixed: I guess towards the end of the

week; but she is out just now, and has not said precisely,—but doubtless will tell you in time. Poor little soul, she too is far from well; but you will take good care of her at Moffat; and the excursion bids fair really to do her good.—Adieu, dear Brother. . . . With love to Sister Phœbe,

Yours ever affectionately,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 258

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 29 June, 1853.

My dear good Mother—. . . This morning we had again a Note from John: he is very punctual about writing; which, as well as his being near you and always within reach, is a great comfort to us. In the Note before last he told us of a *ham* you were about sending; good kind Mother! It was very wise and right that he advised you not to send it at present; but the thought of its being intended to be sent is, and will remain, a thing of real value to me. It is one of a thousand such things with which my poor life, ever since it began, has been made rich by you. Whatever other things have gone wrong with me, the love of my true Mother never went wrong; but followed me ever inseparable, in good and evil fortune, and I should be harder of heart than is suitable for man if I could ever forget that fact. And, alas, what can I do in return for you, dear Mother? Nothing, nothing! I will try to *live* by the noble example you showed; and to hold fast for myself, and speak abroad as I can for others, the precious simple *wisdom* I learned from my Mother: let that be a comfort to her in her old age, in looking back upon a long life that has many

sorrows in it. And let us all take Courage, courage; and look, with humble trust, for a good issue to *all* that was really *good* in us; and thro' Time and thro' Eternity, never quit that sacred hope. Oh thank you, thank you, dear pious-hearted Mother, for the precious breeding you gave me: things that I feel to be *wise*, to be God's *truth*, and fit to be spoken aloud before all mortals, and even thundered in their ears in these sad days,—how often do I find with an unspeakable tenderness of recollection, "*That* is *thy Mother's*, now; that thou got from thy poor Mother, long ago! May God reward her for it,—as of a surety He will and does!"—I think, the older I grow, the more entirely I feel myself my Father's and my Mother's Son; and have more and more reason to be thankful, and piously proud, that I had such Parents. Courage, dear Mother, we will not fear anything, but hope till death and thro' death! The soul that has been devoutly loyal to the Highest, that soul has the eternal privilege to *hope*. For GOOD is appointed it, and not evil, as God liveth!

. . . Jane is going off towards you, she decides, on Saturday first, . . . Poor little Jeannie, she is greatly failed, and I think even failed since last year; but she has a wonderful spirit in her still, and fights along never yielding.—. . .

I am ever my good old Mother's affectionate Son,—with blessings and prayers,—

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 259

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 15 August, 1853.

Dear Jean— . . . A certain John Chorley (once a gentleman of mark in the Railway world and elsewhere; at

present, a retired philosopher, tho' still young; really a clever, learned man, and very fond of *me*) is the only person now known to me in the world who fairly possesses the faculty of *mending a pen*. He has other, many other, fine and useful faculties, and with these too serves us here; but in a particular manner with *pen making* and what belongs to that.—Well, this excellent Chorley complains that, in the whole earth, for a long time back he has not been able to find what he accounts a really good penknife,—but finds *all* blades (even Rodgers' of Sheffield, etc., etc.) to be made of poor ill-tempered steel. I lately gave him my penknife to sharpen: he made both blades keen and fine as a razor;—observed withal that he had not seen such a bit of honest steel as was in that knife for ten years back, and could not get such a piece for love or money. That penknife was got new-bladed by your James at Cutler Hinchcliff's; it was Hinchcliff who put that pre-eminent steel where it now is! In consequence I have come to the resolution (and stated it to Chorley) of getting him a penknife from the same place,—the very *best* Hinchcliff can be persuaded to make. That is all: but really that is something considerable; for Chorley has obliged me hundreds of times, and would run for me by night or by day (tho' a hard and angry man otherwise); so that it would give me real pleasure to make him this little Gift in a complete and triumphant form. Here are the essential particulars of the thing:

Double-bladed knife,—one blade a "cut-stick," the other for pens (or there may be *two* for pens, if you like, but one will do), and sharp-pointed shape is preferred for this. Buckhorn handle. These however are all perfectly unimportant particulars in comparison: the particular of particulars is, that the steel

be as good as mine is! This will cause the grim heart of Chorley to rejoice when he sees it; and he is a judge. Earnestly entreat James and the excellent Hinchcliff to do their very best towards attaining me this small but useful blessing. And there shall be cheerful payment, not of money only, but of gratitude, as reason good. Perhaps Mr. Hinchcliff does not make knives at all? In that case, he must knock the blades out of some useful buckhorn handle, and put in right ones of his own, *right* ones! And this *is* all. . . .

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 260

To John Forster, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Addiscombe Farm, Croydon, 29th September, 1853.

Dear Forster—I am grateful for a word from your hand again, tho' the news is very sad. Till my Wife saw Henry the other day, I could not guess what had become of you, and ran into all sorts of bad conjectures. Alas, the inexorable Years, that cut away from us, one after another, the true souls whom we loved, who loved us truly: that is the real bitterness of life; against which there is no remedy, and natural tears must fall! But we ourselves, my friend, it is not long we have to stay behind; we too shall find a shelter in the Silent Kingdoms; and much Despicability that barked and snarled incessantly round us *here* shall there be without the walls forevermore. "Blessed are the Dead." I often silently say: "If we had done our work, it were good for us to be dead too,—and safe with all our loved ones round us, THERE!" God is Great, say the Moslems; to

which we add only, God is Good,—and have not, nor ever shall have, any more to say.

Happily you are not *worse* in respect of health. You must take all pains (for really that is your great interest), and get better and better. I have no doubt, a *thorough reform* of regimen upon which I hope you have determined, will do wonders for you. Literally wonders. It is a fact, I should not have lasted any one year of these last thirty on your terms; and, on my own, you see I am still struggling along! Attend to this, I very earnestly entreat you. We cannot do with our Forster in that sick state at all!—

This is my third week of an almost perfect Hermitism out here; such a life as I have rarely had experience of; for my Wife is mostly at Chelsea, and for days together I literally do not speak one word! I think it is to end on Saturday. Next week, drive down to Chelsea any day, you will probably find us both;—or write (to my Wife), and *appoint* some evening, with tea, either there or at Lincoln's Inn Fields.—God bless you, dear Forster. Yours always,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 261

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 18 November, 1853.

My dear Jean— . . . The other night some Americans were here; one of them, an official man in his own country, certified me that my *dormant* American Bonds would yet be paid, principal and interest, to the last penny, and that before long! Very well; it was a loss of £230, to which I had quite reconciled

myself; and so the £350 it has now grown to will be like money found, and very useful in the present expenditures,*—if we actually had it! The truth is I never bother myself about money at all; having other far deeper bothers which quite abolish that. —There is another thing I wanted to confide to you and to my Mother, tho' it is a secret and I want you to keep it such. This is it. Prince Albert, as I know from a very sure source (one Sir James Stephen, once an official of weight), proposed me, at the end of this Session of Parliament to Lord Aberdeen for a Pension! *Canny* Aberdeen, a douce, small headed, sleek and feeble old gentleman, whom I have seen once, and talked a little to, getting little but smiles and commonplaces in return,—he shook slightly his canny head, and thought my "heterodoxy" on some points might be objectionable. And so it stands;—and may as well stand; for I am sure I should have had to *refuse* Lord Aberdeen's offer (in the *quantity* and in the style he would have offered); and that would not have been pleasant. I consider it likely enough there will yet a *better* offer of the kind be made, if I live some years; and that we can deal with, as shall then (on clearer grounds) seem good.† Few men, I suppose, ever *wanted* a Pension less: and if it is thrown me as a bit of charity, I am bound not to take it; if either it, or the way of giving it, is not quite to my mind, why should I dream of taking it? "Having carried on my work thus far," as Johnson said, "with so little help from the powerful, I am content to finish it,

* The outlay for the "sound-proof" study now being built on the roof of the house; and for general and extensive repairs and alterations to the house itself.

† The "better offer" was made in December, 1874, by Disraeli, the Grand Cross of the Bath and a pension "equal to a good fellowship." The offer came too late, and was courteously declined.

if less be possible, with less!"—and no Supreme Burgh Bailie (of the Aberdeen species), never so sleek or canny, "can do th' aither ill or guid."—This is the little bit *secret*, which is for my Mother and you. I think it will be better not to mention it farther; for really I should not like it to be known or talked of at all. . . .

LETTER 262

To W. Lattimer, Carlisle.*

The Grange, 15 Decr., 1853.

Sir—I myself hear nothing practical as yet about that cheap edition of my Book; and am inclined to think it may still be a year or two before any such edition actually see the light. This is all the intelligence I can send you on that subject.

As you seem to be a studious enquiring man, I will recommend you to read *well* what good Books you have at command, and to reckon always that reading *well* is greatly more important than reading *much*. Not to say that the best wisdom, for every man, does not lie in Books at all, but in what conclusions he himself can form, and what just insight arrive at, from all manner of suggestions and helps, whereof Books are but one sort.

With many kind wishes, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

T. Carlyle.

* W. Lattimer was a "working man," by trade a cork-cutter.

LETTER 263

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Scotsbrig, 28 December, 1853.

My dear Brother—To-day comes the saddest news I ever sent you from this place; the sorrow you have no doubt long been anticipating: our good and beloved old Mother is gone from us; on this Earth we have no Mother. She died on Sunday last (the 25th) at ten minutes past four in the afternoon; nothing else had been expected for many weeks and months; she had endured much suffering too (tho' without any disease except old age), and was spent to the last thread of weakness, hardly could you fancy a weaker creature with life, with clear intellect and generous affection still left. The good Doctor was unwearied in his attendance, coming from Moffat once or twice a week this long while, and lately staying here nearly altogether. Jean and Mary alternated in their attendance for several months; for almost the last two, it had been chiefly Jean alone whom our Mother seemed to prefer, and who indeed alone of the two had strength sufficient either of body or mind: Jean *refused* to be worn out, and has indeed stood with faithful, almost heroic affection to her task, in a loving manner well rewarded with love; looks greatly fatigued and excited, but I think will recover herself gradually without damage. I came from Chelsea hither only on Friday morning last, after great uncertainties as to what I ought to do,—for I could ill move, and felt that I should be in the way here. It had long been signified expressly to our dear Mother that if she gave the least sign of wish to me I could be with her in one day; but she was

too magnanimous ever to express such a wish; and it was not till last week that I could fairly see I ought to go without delay. During the journey it became frightfully uncertain to me whether I should still find her alive; walking from Kirtlebridge where the morning early train had set me down, I durst ask nobody; I learned with certainty only when half-way up this stair-case. Thank God (as I may do for the rest of my life), my dear old Mother was still alive, still able with a perceptible joy to recognize me: her mind tho' occasionally clouded with pain and extreme weakness, was there, as it had always been, and as it continued still more conspicuously to the end, clear, quietly nobly patient, simple and composed: her spirit, her very form of character and humour (for she occasionally spoke with a faint touch of *jocosity*, in her old fashion even in late weeks) continued *entire* to the very last, to a most singular degree; I likened it to a bit of sharp steel ground now to the very back, yet still the same steel in all respects, and with the same edge. Her weakness that Friday, after all I had heard so long, was almost beyond my expectation; she had a restless weary day, asleep and awake from minute to minute;—mistook us several times; me once, "did not know me at all," yet sent Jane out directly after (the good generous ever-loving Mother!)to bring me back with apologies, "That I was Tom, that she knew me right weel." After midnight when I was retiring, she said as in old healthy days, "Tell us how thou sleeps!" Ah me, ah me! On the morrow, especially towards dusk and afterwards, she was visibly weaker; but her mind was steady and clear as it had ever been, indeed to a degree that still astonishes me. Struggling for breath (for she had not strength to take half an ordinary fill of the lungs, as John explained to us), she was in

great suffering and distress for some hours; little sips of a kind of drink ("give me a *spark* of that thing"), shifting of her posture; restlessly struggling (as seemed evident then) with the last enemy, in this condition she asked for Jean; heard that she was "seeking up coals" (from the old shed you will remember), and thereupon ordered John to "hold the candle to the Window" for light to Jean! Such a trait I never witnessed from any creature before; and there were others of the like which I shall remember with satisfaction as long as I live.— Jean said she nightly heard her whispering her prayers all along; forgetting none of us, "going round by America too now" (as she sometimes would say, when speaking of it), nay not forgetting any public or general interest fit for prayer; and thinking only of herself and her own grandest interests as *subject* and posterior to these. Oh my Brother, we are to be forever thankful to such a Mother! A pious dignity, a truth, affection, generosity, and simple valour and invincibility were in her, such as are given to only very few; and are a high and noble treasure, far above this world's wealth, to all connected with them.— About midnight of Saturday, there being no relief visible anywhere, John ventured not without apprehension, on a small appliance (half her former quantity) of laudanum, in two portions; this very soon brought abatement. A little after midnight, John said to her, "Here's Tom come to bid you goodnight." She looked kindly at me, as she had done even in the worst pain, and she was now somewhat easier; I kissed her cold lips; and she took leave of me in these words, "I'm muckle obliged t'ye,"* audibly whispered; which are forever memo-

* "I am much obliged to you." Had Mr. Froude been in quest of an epigrammatic phrase truly descriptive of the relations between Car-

rable to me;—which except a "yes" and a "no" in answer to questions from John about one and about four o'clock, were the last she spoke in this world. For shortly after midnight, she fell asleep, slept ever deeper for sixteen hours; her look on Sunday morning and all day pointing grandly towards death as we sat by her: about 3.45 P. M. the breathing rather suddenly sank fainter (it had never been harsh, nor was there any phlegm), —paused once or twice, and then gently ceased; and she was with God. Amen, amen.—My only consolation ever since is, the thought that she is freed forevermore from great bodily suffering; that she finished a life full of sorrows, but also full of worth, and such as only a few whom God loves can lead.—This is what I had to write, dear Brother, not in good circumstances for imparting in a proper way such news to you. Please send the Letter forward to Jenny, to whom I will now write only the

lyle and his mother, he ought to have chosen this rather than his celebrated one, "Gey ill to live wi'." For if ever a mother had good cause to be obliged to a son, it was Mrs. Carlyle in regard to her eldest. The origin of the phrase, "Gey ill to deal wi'," which Mr. Froude twists into "Gey ill to *live* wi'," and repeats in this form *ad nauseam*, deserves to be generally known. I have it from Mr. David Wilson, author of "Mr. Froude and Carlyle," to whom it was told in 1895 by Mrs. Hanning, Carlyle's youngest sister, and also, independently, by Mrs. Hanning's eldest daughter, and may be relied on as absolutely correct.—When Carlyle was home at Mainhill in the summer of 1820, he was in more than usually delicate health, and his mother provided chicken for him almost daily, it being the only meat he could digest. He complained to her several times that it pained him to hear, day after day, the screeching of the poor fowls as they were being killed. But the screeching went on; and one day he said: "If you can't stop the screeching, Mother, I can stop the eating; I won't eat another chicken if it is killed in that way." "Eh, what'll thou eat then?" asked his mother; and presently added with mock severity, to the amusement of all at the table, "Thou's gey ill to deal wi' I think." This is the foundation of the now world-famous myth, (still taken for truth by many) that Carlyle's mother "described" her "Tom" as a man "very ill to live with"!

bare fact. The Funeral is to be to-morrow (Monday); the weather is frosty with some snow. You will, after that, hear some humbler details about business, and have your consent asked to what the other three parties here shall think wisest to to be done in that respect.—I received from you duly what you wrote; *well* that you rejected the Books.* I hope to write you soon again; and now bid God bless you!

Your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 264

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 14 February, 1854.

My dear Sister—. . . My poor Mother's good old missives, turning up again in this manner, caught me keenly by the heart. Alas, alas, she is gone from us; and we must not lament her, cannot complain of the universal inevitable law. She was lent to us, as it were, to the very last day that it could be profitable: many a time in the hard cold mornings I think, "*She* is not suffering by it!" We could not protect her farther; the time was come when we had to part. God is over all!—I could not destroy the poor old Letters; yet some day they must be destroyed, for they belong to ourselves alone, and stupid "posterity," if it thought of such a thing, would make mere nonsense of them: I have sealed these two up, in a safe place; I have others also scattered about in certain parcels in my drawers: one day before I die, I must sort all that, and call in

* A present from Carlyle, on which an extortionate charge for carriage had been claimed,—perhaps at the rate of letter-post.

the aid of *fire* in behalf of what is sacred.—My good, my kind and dear old Mother! I speak of her to nobody; speak with people about anything that is of the day and place: but the instant I am left alone, her meek image rises on me; her face as she lay in bed that last Sunday; her kind smiles on me, flickering thro' the gloomy clouds of death in those last two days,—and then backwards thro' all the scenes and passages since memory began with me:—all this is constant enough in its attendance: I often think it is with me as with Ulysses (in old Homer); at the utmost and worst passage of his wanderings he converses with the shade of his Mother! My heart does not lament; but it is sad often as heart can be. And yet not a bitter or unblessed sadness: God be forever thanked that He gave us such a Mother; and spared her with us so long. I will speak no more of these things.

As you seem to have seen my last Letter to Jack, I can have no news to occupy your paper with. We are both of us in the usual ineffectual state of health, not worse, rather *better* I; nor am I quite useless for work, tho' my success is, it must be owned, inconceivably small! I keep mining, and digging and shovelling; something will and must come out of it yet, if I live. If I don't,—well, it is perhaps little matter to anyone, and to me certainly none, if I have done my best: I feel in my heart every day a greater contempt for what they talk of as "fame," "success," etc., in this poor Anthill of a world; and looking at it *thro' spectacles*, as I now do, the royallest figures in it do not seem too royal. I am getting freer and freer of a great many ugly coils, delusions and encumbrances, by dint of seeing them better and myself better,—with old eyes instead of young.

. . . People babble greatly about a Turk* war; and cannons, etc., of ours are actually under sail thither: yet I always think to myself, it surely never *can* come to serious fighting on our part in such a quarrel: one man I know at least who never will fight upon *it*, but wait for a thousandfold better one!—. . .

Yours ever,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 265

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 19 April, 1854.

Dear Jean—. . . Tell me a little about Aird; he seems getting very *rusty* in his Newspaper labours: the death of Wilson † at Edinburgh must have been a heavy stroke to him, tho' it had been long expected as inevitable. Wilson was by far the weightiest Literary figure left in Scotland, or indeed in Britain; and might have been, in fact, a great man, could he have taken care of himself. But he could not; there was from the first a loose joint about the very centre of his existence,—a want, namely, of distinct *veracity* of mind;—so all his fine great gifts went tumbling helter-skelter into huge uncertainty, into inextricable confusion: and on the whole he had to call in the aid of *whisky-punch* to a large extent,‡ for many years; and has come to nothing more than we see. Poor fellow, there was something very generous in him, too; very proud

* The Crimean War.

† "Christopher North."

‡ See Mrs. Gordon's *Life of Wilson*, p. 137.

and stout: nor is it easy for so big a waggon to get thro' the dirty intricacies and vile parish-roads of this world, at present!— . . .

LETTER 266

To Dr. Carlyle, Moffat.

Chelsea, 13 October, 1854.

My dear Brother—I was very glad to hear of your precise locality again; I hope to hear something farther, and more in detail, before long,—to-morrow perhaps? Alas, Moffat is a changed place to you;* a sadly changed place even to me when I think of it! But we must not look too much behind; we must do what is at hand and ahead; our Life, and what we have to *do*, is still ahead. It will give me great comfort indeed to hear that you have gathered yourself together, and made a wise arrangement for still profiting by your future years.

. . . We are living as heretofore; "nothing" the matter. I have been several times at the State-Paper Office, looking after my weary problem: God help me with it. If I live, I must get through it; in one form or another, it is my faith, there comes *good* fruit out of all good labour;—and probably *part* of this is good!

One rather strange thing I must announce. Lord Ashburton came here, unexpectedly, one morning; hot from the Highlands (on some sudden errand, connected with dangers in the money market, I suppose); he was to *return* in 48 hours, and I did not see him again. He wore a respectable, really rather handsome *beard:* once, in a careless way I had said, last

* Dr. Carlyle's wife had died a few weeks before this date.

year, if *he* adopted a beard, I would follow: he now claimed my promise, Jane and he combining; I admitted the promise, the desirability, etc., but strove to postpone: on a sudden he calls Jane to him, goes up to my bedroom,—takes away all my razors; *has* them now with him, sealed up!—It is a fact, I am now four days without shaving, and in very questionable mood about it,—tho' I do save half an hour daily by the job; and see no way *out*, except to let the hirsute process go on!— . . .

Your affectionate Brother,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 267

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 10 November, 1854.

My dear Sister—. . . The day before yesterday I went to Windsor; for the sake of innumerable Portraits, Engravings, Miniatures, etc., which I had got access to there. It is some twenty and odd miles off: one of the beautifullest Palaces,—for situation, etc., much the beautifullest I ever saw. Built on a short steep hill (high for those parts, and beautifully *clothed*); commanding an immense plain, the richest in the Island; with oak forests, with the River, with etc., etc., to all lengths. I regarded little or nothing of that; but proceeded straight to my Print rooms, where a Mr. Glover, the "Librarian" of the place, was extremely kind to me, and I saw really a great many things that may be useful in my operations; and had four diligent and goodish hours out of a day. I mean to go back when the weather is brighter (for Pictures and old eyes), and when the "Court" is not there. Towards four

o'clock, while I was busy with a hundred Prints of Frederick, there came a soft step to the door; I did not look up till Glover said, "Prince Albert!"—and there in truth was the handsome young gentleman, very jolly and handsome in his loose greyish clothes, standing in the door; not advancing till I bowed. His figure and general face were well known to me, well-built figure of near my own height, florid *blond* face (with fair hair); but the *eyes* were much better than I had fancied; a pair of strong steady eyes, with a good healthy briskness in them. He was civility itself, and in a fine simple fashion: a sensible man withal. We talked first of Frederick's Portraits; then went, by a step or two, into the Saxon genealogy line, into the Wartburg, Coburg, Luther, Frederick the Wise (that is the Prince who caught up Luther, put him safe into the Wartburg; he is *Ancestor* of Albert); we had there abundant scope of talk, and went on very well, the Prince shewing me a Portrait he had copied of "Frederick the Wise" (not ill done), telling of a Luther Autograph he had (from Coburg, and a joke appended to the getting of it there),—when a *domestic* glided in upon us, murmured something, of which I heard, "gone out to the Terrace!" (Queen out, wants you,—he had been in Town all morning)—whereupon, in a minute or two, our Dialogue winding itself up in some tolerable way, Prince Albert (prince of courtesy) bowed himself out, back foremost and with some indistinct mention of "your *Works*," which did not much affect me; and so ended our interview. I had had an indistinct questionable anticipation of some such thing all day; but thought too I was safe, having *met* his carriage on the railway as I came. However, it was managed as you hear; and I was not ill pleased with it, nor had any reason,—but *well pleased*

to have it over as you may fancy. Not a word more, dear Jean. Your affectionate Brother,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 268

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 24 November, 1854.

Dear Jean—. . . Jane is going down to The Grange on the 8th of next month; I do not go then, nor for certain at all: I have continued to refuse, as inoffensively as I could, being flatly determined that I could not and would not go at that particular time.* Ah me!—Till the 2nd of January therefore I am alone here; doing whatever I can (which is sorrowfully *little*) towards getting *work* forward: what other things have I left for me? *On* the 2nd of January,—we shall see! . . . I bore away, however, with a respectable obstinacy: it sometimes seems to me the heavy wheels are going round at last, and the big waggon making some way thro' its sea of quagmires: this, when you have stood many months tugging desperately at the chains without the least result (except breaking *them* now and then) is a consolation, a certain glimmer of consolation, under every thing! But I must not *brag* yet; nor will I.

. . . All the world is in disconsolation here about Sebastopol: indeed it seems to me one of the wretchedest things I ever looked at, taken altogether; but only what is to be looked for, being wholly the work of the *fools* among us, not of the wise. I suppose they must take Sebastopol, if they should

* So near the anniversary of his mother's death.

all die for it;—and it will avail them nothing (I fear) when taken. . . .

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 269

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 25th December, 1854.

Dear Jean—. . . Alas, I remember too well where we were last year this time, and what we were doing and witnessing! All yesterday the scene stood before me as if I were still in it; indeed it is no day out of my mind: and I find in general it has made an irreparable breach in my existence,—and strangely left me with a feeling of being *stript bare* in this world. To you who have children of your own, and are so many years younger, the breach will gradually heal itself: but for me, I feel constantly as if I were henceforth irrecoverably an impoverished man. Our dear and good and brave old Mother! Yet it is not a sorrow to me, it is a stern comfort rather, that *she* is now out of the wind and wet, from which none of us could screen her loved existence. From her grave she yet calls to us, Struggle faithfully piously, and you also may reach a happy haven!—God is great, God is also *good*. We will say no more on this sad subject. It continues very sad to me, and very stern and grand and strange.

. . . I have got a Pamphlet from Glasgow, about that Lord Rector Election which was going on while you were there. It contains (I was surprised to find) fierce denunciations of my Heterodoxy,—tho' itself very favourable, and in the way of condemning these. "Can do thee naither ill na' good," all that! In fact, tho' I find all the *rabble* of Literature, or a greater

part of the rabble, are set against me, there is a steady, satisfactory, and to myself surprising progress with the small better class in all kinds. Which, I find on the whole, is quite as it ought to be. Let us hold on therefore; and never mind the village curs, nor the muddy ways and other difficulties. . . .

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 270

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 1st January, 1855.

My dear Sister—This is Newyear's Day, according to our mode of reckoning; and I cannot forbear to send you expressly the "wishes of the season"; and will beg you to accept the inclosed small Memorial of me,—changing it into any little Gift for yourself that may promise to be useful, and bring me into your thoughts now and then. You can get the couple of coins yourself (if you prefer that way); and may believe there is no *truer* wish circulating at the present season than the one I send you for "a *good* Newyear," if there be any such thing going under the sun just now!—Nay, why do I murmur! There is always a *good* year for him that will stir himself valiantly in it. Let us stand to our tasks, then; and know that a Taskmaster is above us, whose eye, and purpose with us, *cannot* err.

The *Westminster Review* comes to-day (or rather along with *this*, and not till to-morrow, for it is now dark, and a blowy night): you will find in it a little Article by me called *Prinzenraub* (*i. e.*, "Prince *rob*" or the stealing of Princes); that you can read, James and you, tho' it will not do much for you: it is the only thing I have printed this long while. The rest of

the Number I consider to be very bad; *Fraser* is so utterly dishwashy it really seems not worth sending; but *will* come too, I suppose, by and by.—. . .

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 271

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Chelsea, 8 April, 1855.

My dear Alick—To-day I send you a small mournful Gift; which, I need not doubt, will be very precious to you. You remember perhaps I got a Portrait* done, at Dumfries, before you went away, of One who has now left us, and who is forever dear to us all. I have now had a few Copies taken of it; and am sending one to each of the *Seven* of us who still remain (no other gets a Copy, for there were only seven, "seven *good* ones," bargained for); and here inclosed is your share. Having one still over, not upon a card, I put it in; you may give it to Tom, who used to write to his good Grandmother, and was well loved by her: he will perhaps remember her when we also are all away. The Likeness seems to me rather good. The poor fellow that did the Oil-Picture, who was once a Mill-boy at Glenessland, took to drinking, etc., after his success as a Painter at Dumfries, and is now dead himself. The Copies are of the kind called *Photograph* (done by the sunlight, and a certain apparatus they have): it is easy to take as many copies as one likes; but I wanted only *seven*.—You can keep yours in the cover where it is, till you get a little frame for it. I have sent one to Jenny by this same mail across the Ocean;

* Of his mother. See *ante*, i. 273.

and that is the last I had. Enough *said* now on that small subject, which will give rise to many thoughts in you, very sad but not unblessed, I trust.

It seems a long while since we got any full stock of news from the *Bield* in Canada. I think a Letter to Graham was the last direct thing. We understand you to be toiling along in the old course of labour and exertion; and that you do not at all forget us any more than we you, in our silent multifarious reflexions and anxieties. I grow yearly more silent; *write*, in the Letter way, less and less, for a long time back,—in fact no Letter at all that has not a clear claim to be written. The swift flight of Time; the inevitable *nearness* of the Evening and Night "wherein no man can work," admonishes me continually to *do* what I can while it is Day. The frivolous noise of men about me is rather an oppression to me than otherwise; and I much prefer my silent upper room here,—and go *puddling* on, accomplishing little, almost nothing (for it is terribly unhandy work I am upon, and no end to the *quantity* of it), yet still refusing to give up.—If I live I *shall* get done with it; and *then*, it is one of my dreams that I shall perhaps have a sail to America, and see my true Brother again before all end! Well do I remember always the pair of little brown fists (probably fifty years ago now) which I noticed suddenly interfere in some battle I was fighting on the Ecclefechan streets, one summer afternoon,*—a memorable and pretty little phenomenon to me! . . . God bless you all.

T. Carlyle.

* Carlyle while struggling against superior numbers, suddenly became aware that a reinforcement had arrived in the shape of his brother Alick, who "with little fists like walnuts rained rapid blows on the enemy," and helped to turn the tide of battle.

LETTER 272

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 19 August, 1855.

Dear Sister—I have been in the country for a ten days, as perhaps you know: . . .

My place of rustication was Suffolk; some eight or nine miles nearer you than Ipswich, which country-town is 70 or 80 miles off this; on a tide-river called the Orwell, perhaps ten miles from the real sea or German ocean;—much about my own distance from said sea, for I lay northward of Ipswich, and within reach of another "tidal river," in which, at high water, there was a tolerable salt-water bathe to be had. I went to one FitzGerald,* an excellent modest and affectionate character, one of my oldest acquaintances in this part of the earth: he is younger son of a gentleman of very great wealth who came to *bankruptcy*, nevertheless, with such result as you may fancy: this FitzGerald of mine, who is only just now, after seven or eight years after his Father's death, getting his affairs winded out into clearness and effectuality (he will still have plenty of money for a man of his simple ways), has been living, for some time past, with an old farmer of his Father's in a kind of old *villa*, now used as farm house; the people greatly attached to him, and of honest rational character, they and their house likely to suit *me*, as FitzGerald asserted, inviting me thither. Which indeed proved to be true; for I liked the goodwife and goodman extremely well after their fashion, and found the country and the farm house much to my taste,—could I have been but "well let alone"(according

* Edward FitzGerald.

to the bargain); but in that we did rather fail! Alas that is a thing nowhere to be fallen in with,—I think, never more, for me especially; such is often the sad sigh of my soul in late times! That country is now all golden with excellent wheat, plenty of green lanes too, endless country roads and paths, with trees everywhere *framing* the gold picture in luxuriant green: a country not unlike Scotland in its fruitfullest places, except that there are never *mountains* in the distance, and that the streams are few, and all sedgy, silent, and we must say rather *ugly*. I walked greatly, bathed every day, was driven to the sea-shore, to Aldborough, to Orford; staid three days with the Poet Crabbe's son (a very excellent old Parson of those parts, who took much to me): in short I had no rest to the sole of my foot,—none or too little;—and was willing enough to get away from it yesterday, exactly on the eleventh day, for the chance of such quiet as home might afford. . . .

LETTER 273

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Chelsea, 29 August, 1855.

My dear Brother—Your Letter came to us a week or two ago; very welcome, as all tidings from you always are. I read it; sent it on to Jack (who was then at Scotsbrig), by whom it was communicated to the rest of the kindred. You must not neglect to write to us, to me in particular; so long as I live in this world, you may be always sure of one fellow-creature to whom nothing that befalls you can be indifferent. We are all getting old now, I oldest; and must try to keep one another company, to cheer, and participate with one another, the best

we can. I must say, looking back, my Brothers, and you as the nearest to me,* have been a great comfort to my pilgrimage, one way and another. Nothing that has been given me in life deserves better to be reckoned as a blessing and possession. For which let us piously thank the All-bountiful! Many Households, of *less* apparent capability, have gained far more promotion in this rather scurvy epoch of the world than our Father's Household has: of which we will make no complaint at all; nay probably we should take that also as a *blessing*, and silently thank God for it (really and truly so):—but in all our ups and downs we have loved one another; yes; and surely all the yellow metal of California and all the foul puffs of Newspapers now going, are but poor "wealth" in comparison to that!—I often think of these things but perhaps it is good to *know* them, without speaking much about them. . . .

Jack, with his two boys† in vacation from School, went to Scotsbrig in July or June; he has been there ever since, . . . He is far the *happiest* of the family I do believe; and it would be so easy for a grumbling discontented unhealthy nature to pick holes without end in the life he has had. I often look at him, poor fellow, and his head (six years younger than mine) now old and utterly grey, with a tender and wondering feeling. He has a great deal of superior intellect running waste, and yielding no adequate crop at all; that is the worst of it; but that is nothing like the worst of *bads* in this world, among the outcomes of human lives! He and I never have any cross word now; for I have long since recognized that rebuking of him is of no use; that Nature is stronger than any argument against Nature, and that my

* Nearest in age: Alexander Carlyle was born 4th August, 1797.
† Dr. Carlyle's stepsons.

poor Jack is even *made* so, and might have been infinitely worse made. "Ungrateful, how could he have been better made!" I often say to myself. He is a truly loving Brother; and from me has forgiven innumerable provocations, and superficial irritations from an old date! . . .

LETTER 274

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 27 November, 1855.

Dear Brother—I would at once send you *Lewes's Goethe*, tho' I know not whether so much weight (probably 4 lbs. or so) were worth carrying so far: but Tait has it on loan; . . . so that we must wait till his turn is past.

The Book is decidedly good as such Books go, but by no means very interesting if you have a strict taste in Books.

Sir Colin Campbell was, or still is, here; home from the Crimea in deep discontent with the course of things there; Anthony Sterling was to make an auction of their camp furniture, and follow "in ten days." Meanwhile the Queen's Majesty and others have persuaded Campbell to go back: Sterling, just when the auction is over, will find that he must buy again, and stay where he is. I wish they had both come home: I should then have been pretty nearly free from care about that brutish Turk-war business, and willing to let it go as it liked.

. . . Ruskin was here the other night;—a bottle of beautiful *soda-water*,—something like *Rait* of old times, only with an intellect of tenfold vivacity. He is very pleasant company now and then. A singular element,—very curious to look upon,—

in the present puddle of the intellectual artistic so-called "world" in these parts at this date.— . . .

LETTER 275

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 5th May, 1856.

Dear Jean— . . . When clear of *dinnering* (which I exert my best industry to be, but am led into it once a fortnight or so, do what I may), there is some capability of work in me again, and I stagger forward with less of despair.

Nay I believe I shall have to get to Press this very Autumn (or sooner) with the First Half of my wretched Book: once fastened to the Printer, I shall *have* to sort these accumulated rubbish mounds, and cut my way *thro'* them better or worse: I see little chance of doing it so well otherwise as on brief compulsion of that kind. Two volumes could perhaps be done in that way; then a little pause for other two (or one), which ends it! . . .

There is also going to be another work: an Edition (*cheaper* if not exactly "cheap") of all my bits of Works; 14 or 15 volumes, 6/- per volume, and very respectable paper and print. This is very welcome for several reasons,—first of all that it will yield a little fraction of *payment* again (more than I ever got before perhaps) after so long an interval. For the rest it will not create much fash to me,—at least not if I can get a right hand, to correct the Press, to make Indexes, etc., and steadily oversee the thing; which I by all means endeavour to do.—All this is of the nature of *good* luck comparatively. The Bookseller came down with it the other morning under that character; I believe he was afraid I might take my new Book past

him, which he would not have liked. A stingy, close-fisted kind of fellow; but long headed, skilful in his craft; and, so far as I know, exact to his bargain. I shall probably continue with him after all,—"keeping an eye upon my partner," as the Irish gentleman did when dancing with a Bear. . . .

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 276

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 20 June, 1856.

My dear Sister— . . . I have got a small bit of my Book actually *done*, and laid into the drawer, waiting for more which lies in heaps ahead of me, in the *un*rid* state. I am seriously purposing to go to Press with it in Winter, and let the Printer *chase* me through it. Were I in average health of body, this would do:—I must try to get into the old poor average! The day before yesterday I settled the bargain with Chapman, the Bookseller, about the "Carlyle's Works," which is coming out: this will actually make its appearance some time about October, and go on month by month for sixteen months;—I have got a kind volunteer (young Barrister man, called Gilchrist, much an admirer, etc.), who will take the trouble of all that off my hands: so that, were it once fairly started, I hope to have little farther to do with it; but to be at leisure to go on with the *Frederick* (the Printer chasing me) as if I had nothing else to mind. —A busy Winter coming for me, if all go as I could wish and intend. . . .

* Unsorted.

LETTER 277

To Dr. Carlyle, Paris.

The Gill, 27 August, 1856.

My dear Brother— . . . We are all well, to the common degree or better, in these parts. I have been here now into the fifth week; following out my Program; was away only three nights at Scotsbrig (bad weather, and *fash* to me in consequence), and one afternoon over to Dumfries (to tea and back again): the nearest approach to perfect silence, solitude, and unadulterated country regimen, I have almost ever made for so long. Mary has been kindness itself to me, as well as all the Household big and little; Margaret is one of the cleverest lasses that ever waited on me: I have had a horse daily from Jamie of Scotsbrig; *item* a gig and horse (tho' seldom using that); I bathed so long as weather and tide served:—I have seldom been more comfortable in late years, and as to lodgings, etc., I never was better served in any house whatever. I brought some work with me too; which has been a constant resource, and useful otherwise,—tho' I am now pretty much at the end of my tether in that respect. We found your key at Scotsbrig; I read the whole of *Suetonius* while lying there in the wet days (a very curious Book for one after 30 years of abeyance): your *Köhler* (*Reichs Historie*) with two portabilities of my own are my whole Historical Library here: I also read in a volume of your *Plato* at nights,—but find him nearly insupportable, with definitioning and hair-spliting, tho' there is a fine high vein too in him, of magnanimous

perception, humour, godlike indignation veiled in silence, and other rare gifts. . . .

Your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

Thanks for the Vevay Epitaphs, which I keep carefully. I had got Broughton's from one Vinet, by Erskine's means;—Ludlow's too I had seen somewhere, but forgotten.—Tait has done a fine photograph* of Frederick II. and his Sister;—he is off, I believe, or going.

LETTER 278

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Scotsbrig, 3 October, 1856.

My dear Brother— . . . In the beginning of September I had unwillingly to take a long journey into the Highlands to visit "the Ashburtons"; (kind English friends of mine) who were "deer-stalking" there. Far away beyond Aberdeen and Inverness, amid surly black mountains, solitary crags and bogs,—a country thrice as wild as Craigenputtock, and otherwise of the same kind of character. To me not beautiful at all. But such things have a charm for idle English people with more money than enough! Nothing can be *madder* than the doings of English grandees at present, in those Highland parts, in pursuit of deer.—In fine I had a very laborious journey to and from; and was not disappointed in the want of either pleasure or profit in that part of my Tour: however, I had to go; and now it is *done*, and no mischief sticking by it,—perhaps a little health

* Of the picture of Friedrich and Wilhelmina entitled "The Little Drummer," by Pesne.

gained by the endless locomotion, and confusion of weather and other things.—I got hither the night before last; found Jane waiting me, all well with the rest here and hereabouts; and to-morrow morning we set off for London again, to arrive that same night, and end these wanderings. . . .

At Scotsbrig, as you may conceive, I found a great sad *want* and change, of which I could say nothing: Jamie and I went one Sunday to the Ecclefechan Church-yard (which is now all walled in, and locked till you get the key);—there, yes there they all lay; Father, Mother, and Margaret's grave between them: silent now, they that were wont to be so speechful when one came among them after an absence. I stood silent, with bared head, as in the sacredest place of all the world, for a few moments; and I daresay tears again wetted these hard eyes which are now unused to weeping. All silent, sheltered for ever from all the storms and hardships;—your little Bairns lie near on the right;—and the big sky is high over-head, and the Maker of all reigns there, and here. One need not much mourn the lot of the Dead: it will, in all events, be our own so very soon.—I did not return to that sacred spot; but if I come again to this country, I will visit it. No shrine can be so holy to a man.

Everything is now changed and changing with furious rapidity in this country,—principally owing to the railways, I think. A great increase of luxury is coming over all ranks; prices of everything very nearly *doubled* (13d. per lb. for butter, 1d. each for eggs, and all in proportion), so that farmers, *with a lease*, prosper amazingly. Much draining goes on too; nobody but *Irishmen* to do it. Jamie says, *porridge* will be out of use altogether in twenty years.—I cannot say I love these aspects of things; but they are not to be altered. . . .

LETTER 279

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 28 October, 1856.

My dear Sister—Here was a heavy bit of news unexpectedly awaiting me when I came down stairs to-night! Your Letter is the very image of a Mother's Tears: woe, affection, resignation, grief without measure. Alas, alas. I myself could almost weep (tho' long unused to it), to think of your bit bonnie Bairn that was smiling in my face last Autumn,—like a little human flower, new-sprung on the bosom of Eternity,—and is now cropt away on a sudden from you. Forever, in this world; but he is *gone* to Eternity again and to his Maker; and *there* we shall all of us very shortly be, as he is. God is great; God also is good. I see you are nobly resigned to a Higher Will, as it beseems us all; and the tears you weep are soft and pious. God grant you his consolations, my dear Sister; and may this heavy stroke (as our dear Mother would have said) *be sanctified* to all concerned,—to you who feel it more than all. A mother's love; a mother's sorrow; there is not in the scene of things any feeling comparable to it, I believe;—and if pious and wise, that is a blessed grief withal.—Write me a word, so soon as you can, and tell me that your distress is getting settled into its place,—as all things have to do in this stern world.

I have had no health since I quitted Annandale; that day of Express-Train and then the reeky tumult of this Babylon, seemed to demolish all the former account. Yet I somehow at bottom, have felt always as if I *were* considerably better.

And it is certain I am getting into the very thick of my work,—in a humour grimmer and sadder than I ever knew before. I have got a Clerk (to do writing for me, etc., etc., who answers well), and this afternoon I got a Horse and tried it. These two articles and the *way* I got them, one after the other, seem to me almost like monitions of Providence, and a token that I *shall* get my sad task accomplished.—God's blessing be on you, my dear Sister. I add no more.

Ever your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 280

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 11th May, 1857.

Dear Sister—. . . My work is getting on laboriously and in general *ill:* I am going to Press, however, *this week,* will do Two volumes (half the work) off my hands; then *wait* to gather strength for the other Two,—or leave them lying altogether, if I be not stronger. Never was such an *undoable* work cut out for me; and never was I in such case for doing any work whatever. But if we hold up till this time twelvemonth; if we *can;*—and we must be canny! an immense rubbish mound will be rolled off one's poor down-broken old heart!—

The Death of Lady Ashburton, which you will see noted in the *Examiner,* was altogether unlooked for by me, tho' a great deal of confused rumour, and direct tidings too, circulated round us, all winter, on the illness which came on at Nice. I parted from her in October; fancying she and a group of

friends she had gathered were to have the pleasantest winter, and it ends in this way. The event comes heavy upon me and stretches far and wide as I consider it. A lesson sent me and truly a very sad one; and a *loss* in several respects such as I need not hope to replace. Since our dear Mother's death there has nothing like it come. "God *sanctify* it to those concerned!" as my Mother would have prayed;—the one wise prayer.—. . .

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 281

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Chelsea, 13th August, 1857.

My dear Brother—. . . Ever since I wrote last year from Scotsbrig, I have been working like a slave; day and night involved in confusions, of the most unmanageable nature;—the only limit, not to break *myself* down altogether, in which case there would be no hope of the job. Never in my life had I a thing so difficult to do; and I am fallen old, and *feckless* in comparison; *hope* much dead in me, especially; not *fit* to handle such huge mountains of rubbish;—yet dreadfully unwilling to be beaten by them, too! Being withal in the most evident state of special ill-health, *worse* than even naturally belongs to me at this age, I decided on getting a Horse again; have had a Horse since November last; and go riding daily as the sun; which does (I sometimes think) begin to tell on me at last, or at least prevents me getting still *worse:*—and so I fight along; and hope fairly to finish this frightful job too; after which I contemplate taking a *rest* for the remainder of my life, or mainly "a rest." This is a fine brisk Horse I have got (now

into my *third* thousand of miles, riding upon him "after health"):* how often did I think of my poor true Alick who used to buy me horses, and do all things for me, in old days! The poor *Cutlugs* [cropt-ears] which you bought for £2 10*s.*, at Mainhill (do you remember it?), I often think, almost like to cry, of that poor *Snaffle;* and would not give the memory of it for the price of the best Horse now alive! My dear Brother, I know that your affection for me lasts and has lasted, faithful to the end: you need not doubt that mine towards you is, was, and will be the like. That is a mournful but blessed possession for us both, wherever we be in this world.—

But the best news of myself I must give too; namely that I am fairly *printing* that unspeakable New Book; 150 pages of it *off my hands* forevermore; and if I can hold out wisely I shall verily do it, and get rid of it one day, in a not discreditable manner! For years back I have had hardly any other wish left. About this time twelve-month, if I can go on neither too *fast* nor too slow, I expect to be rid of Three Volumes;—there will remain then, after such pause as I like, other Two Volumes, and not the tenth part of the difficulty in *them.* Steady, therefore; "steady!" as the drill serjeants say.

My poor Jane took a cold last year, two or three weeks after returning home with me; and could not get out of it again,—ill and weak in a high degree, often confined to bed (never out of doors at all), dreadfully off for want of sleep especially,—all winter thro', in my hurries this was (to her, still more than to myself perhaps) a great aggravation. Not till the end of May could she get out again; and still she continued far below par in strength,—and I fear, continues so in some sensible

* This was the high-bred and beautiful "Fritz."

degree. There appeared to me to be nothing *specifically wrong* with her; merely the crisis or summing up of a long tract of sickly sleeplessness, etc., etc., which was come to a head: perhaps she might be a thought *better* even, could she once gather strength again. About a month ago, being pressingly invited by the old Misses Donaldson (whom perhaps you remember), she went to Haddington; thence into Fife (to her Cousin Walter of Liverpool, who is a Clergyman there). . . . She is, this very day I think, coming over to Edinburgh to her Aunts. . . . After a week with her Aunts she goes back to Haddington,—thence *home* to me; I should say about the beginning of September. She does not appear to have gained much in strength, poor little Soul; but we hope she will find herself really profited (as has sometimes been my own case) on getting into her old place, and summing the whole up, as then happens. I used to liken myself to an old *garron* whose harness, collar, etc., had worn it into "*raws*": going 300 miles off, you get into *new harness;* which likewise hurts you: but on resuming the old harness, the "*raws*" are found somewhat mended nevertheless!—

. . . Dumfriesshire and all places are what they call "prospering" at present: many circumstances (perhaps the California Gold, I privately reckon, most of all) have given such an explosive impulse to "trade," all corners of this Country are testifying it. To me it is by no means exclusively beautiful, this enormous effulgence of wealth, and with it of luxury and gaudery and folly, on the part not of the *wise* men of the community (for it is not they that the "wealth" mainly falls on): —it is on the contrary inexpressibly *ugly* to me when I reflect on it; and I perceive that the Devil is in it, he in fact and no

Saint! However, that is the course at present; all things rising in price; all manner of gamblers getting "fortunes," etc., etc.: and by and by there will be a very *burbly* account to settle indeed! I often think, for myself and you, we are better *not concerned* in it: I just above the fear of poverty and nothing more; you ditto, with your own bit of the Earth's surface secured for a field of honest industry to your children and you. There are more *secrets* in Heaven's ways of doing "kindness" to men than they are always aware of! . . .

There was an account from Tom (I think to the Doctor in Winter last) about an adventure in Maple Sugar with his Brother-in-law, which I read with much interest. The two rugged sons of Nature reading *Homer* in the Bush, while their pans boiled, made an admirable picture to me,—full of health, and rugged honest life and worth. . . .

A Letter when you *can*.

Your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 282

To W. Lattimer, Carlisle.*

Chelsea, 3 March, 1858.

Dear Sir—In addition to all other hindrances, I am at present, and for many months back, overwhelmingly busy; every moment of my time occupied. Nor indeed, with such ignorance of the details as is inevitable to me, could it well be advantageous to interfere with advice. A child learns from his father what view of the universe (and also what *practice*

* See *ante*, p. 158, n.

in it) the father actually *has*, not pretends to have; and I should say, it was one of the clearest and most comprehensive duties, on the part of the father, to proceed *loyally* with his child,—loyally, and with his best wisdom and caution,—in this as in other matters.

There is a Book by Jean Paul, called "*Levana*, or The Doctrine of Education" (some such title); a small volume, which has been translated; which I should judge it might be worth your while to procure and study: you will find a great many fruitful ideas in it, in reference to the task you have on hand. In Wilhelm Meister's *Travels* (sequel to Wilhelm's *Apprenticeship*) by Goethe, there is, by intimation rather than by direct lecture on the subject, by far the best account that I have ever known to be written, especially in modern times, of that high matter. I recommend this, on all hands, for many years past, as the Book of Books on Education of the young soul in these broken distracted times of ours; but do not find that almost any English person yet reads it with understanding.

Believe me,

Yours with many kind regards,

T. Carlyle.

Chelsea [Spring, 1858].

In answer to Mr. Lattimer,—in great haste,—T. C.

1. Forms of devotion, "Infant Prayers" and other, I should judge, might have a very good effect, on one proviso (but this a rigorous one), That the father himself completely *believed* in them. If the father do not entirely believe, if he even unconsciously doubts, still more if he do not even know what

belief is, the child will at once more or less clearly feel this; and the effects will be *bad*, and that only,—perhaps to a degree little suspected at present.

2. That we are all "bound to speak the truth" to our fellow creatures; and the divine importance of doing that is plain enough by this time, or ought to be. But the faithful man here too will keep his eye upon the concrete fact as well as upon the rubric, or *letter* of the law; and will know that it is with the *fact* that he has got to deal. To set up "cases of conscience," and puzzle over them, will not much help him. The permitted limits of simulation, who could undertake to define them? We do not *inform* the *fox*, inquiring of us, where our poultry lodges. All men are entitled at least to keep their thoughts *dumb* when they please. Answers that have that effect are a refuge possible in most cases.—And for the rest there is a far deeper *veracity* than that of the tongue; which it is infinitely important to acquire, and which I have often noticed superstitious professors of tongue-truth to be greatly destitute of.

3. All nations that have risen beyond the rank of Samoyedes have had laws, which they kept as sacred, in reference to matters sexual: and generally the higher they have risen in the scale of nations, the nobler and more imperative have such laws been. *Continence* (in this and in all things) is the perpetual duty of all men and all women. Chastity, in the true form of it, is probably the most beautiful of virtues,—essential to all noble creatures. A lewd being has fatally lost the *aroma* of his existence; and become *caput mortuum* in regard to the higher functions of intelligence and morality. No frightfuller feature of these ruined generations presents itself than that of

their utter corruption in this respect.—Alas, what can a parent do in such times? He will need all his wisdom to do even a little for his child in that important particular. For injudicious meddling is capable, I believe, of frightfully *worsening* the affair.

LETTER 283

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Addiscombe Farm, Croydon, 5 May, 1858.

My dear Sister—We are out here for a few days of country air and quiet, which it was thought Jane would profit by, and I too; we came on Monday and are doing very well hitherto;—are to stay till Monday next, and then take ourselves home again. I have my horse with me; and my principal utility here is to go riding with the hospitable Lord of the place, who is an excellent horseman but prefers company to solitude in his excursions thro' these beautiful neighbourhoods. Three hours of it a day we have; the rest of my time goes to idle reading, lounging, smoking,—with perhaps a *Proofsheet* which had rather not *wait* till my return home. We are printing along without abatement of speed; and I still hope to see the *end* of it about the end of this month or shortly after. Which will be a welcome event indeed!—

The country is beautiful as May itself; this (about noon now) is one of the finest days I ever saw: all is beautiful here and around,—and all is very sad to me and others! It was yesterday gone a year that the presiding Genius of it was called suddenly away; and left a blank that will never be filled up to those that staid behind! It is the universal lot of man:

what can we say? At the years I have now got to, the world is by necessity becoming a very vacant place. . . .

Good bye, dear Jean,

Thy affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 284

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 12 June, 1858.

Dear Brother—. . . My Book is at last actually done;*—*last* revise (sheet and half), a mere formal matter, will probably come to-night; I put the *dates* upon the margin of it, see if Chorley has any remarks (Chorley has read all the final proofs, and is occasionally of profit in his lynx-eyed way): that over, we are fairly at the "*end* of Volume II.";—and anything farther can be settled, from any *distance* I may be at, by aid of Rowland Hill.

The question now is, How to get my Horse carried into Annandale *quam primum?*

. . . Jane is a little better than when I wrote last; but still as weak as need be. She does not yet decide positively on anything: but, I think, will be likely to follow me to Scotland, in not many weeks. There is small temptation to stay here, in our circumstances. The blessing of clean air to breathe, and some kind of silence to live in, are not attainable, however many others are. . . . A male young friend with an accordion and open window still nearer, is (happily for me, not for him poor soul) fallen sick and therefore silent. A "retired

* That is, the first two volumes of it.

cheesemonger," too, has his dog chained out busy barking; hens that have laid are proclaiming the fact all round; and a dim tremendous sound of advancing Organ-grinders is occasionally audible in the distance!—"Dizzy" too, I suppose, is getting ready *his* eloquence for the evening: that, if one reflect, is the appropriate accompaniment to all these anarchic discords and delirious misarrangements.—. . .

LETTER 285

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada

Chelsea, 15 October, 1858.

My dear Brother—. . . I am now here after unusual wanderings; one job (or half of a job) *done*, the other not *begun:* before beginning, I will have a word with dear old Alick, faithful Brother Wayfarer with me on this Earth almost from my first starting, and whose unalterable love, responded to by my own, is one of the sacred treasures I have still left here.

These two volumes of Frederick were by far the hardest job ever laid upon me, even in the best of my strength; often enough I thought, within the last two years I have been pulling and toiling, that I should *never* get thro' it. I had to ride very diligently, and be *canny* too; or that sad prophecy might have come true! However they *are* now done, those two volumes (and people are reading them, with much noise which I take care to hear little of);—and there are still two more to be done (perhaps two years of hard work, if I still live); but they are not nearly so difficult, I expect, as the former were, if I can only keep my strength so long!—I got out of these

first Two Volumes in June last, or mainly out of them, for *my* share: but the Bookseller did not *publish* them till quite lately, the beginning of this month. . . .

The instant I had got done with my part of the Task, I ran off for Annandale; end of June last;—quite worn to the ground, and in very great need of rest. John, with some of his boys, was at Scotsbrig; otherwise perhaps I had aimed thither: as it was, I made for the Gill; and continued about two months there, as *idle* as a dry bone; sauntering about in strict silence, riding a little, reading a little,—peaceable, but in the natural sadness of humour all the time. Jane whom I am sorry to say was in very feeble state,—as she is generally, poor thing, for the last two years;—. . . [*letter torn*]; came to Scotland about the end of August (just when I was *leaving;* so badly had we ordered it); I now have her here safe again, a little stronger against the winter storms that are coming. . . . A man of 63 has a strange feeling when visiting his native country,—as of a *ghost* coming back to the Earth! I rode one day, market day, thro' Annan; did not see one soul whose face was known to me; only the old stone walls were familiar; and strangers gazed at my "wide-awake hat" and old grey beard,—asking, "Who's that?"— . . .

May God bless you ever, you and yours,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 286

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 29 January, 1859.

My dear Brother—Here are two small Books, for the Post along with this: one the *Baron Munchausen* (which I never read

in my life till the other morning) you will give to John [Carlyle, Scotsbrig], with my compliments, and wishes of "much good may *it* do him";—young creatures did all read it, in my time; and it is a Book that will survive many! I wanted, in fine, to know what it was. An *English* production I now find; date a little before my birth;—who the Author? Should have been known; but is not. Intended as a satire upon *Bruce*, I perceive; and upon things in general.

The other Book Larkin also picked up for me: I have in *MS.* an English Translation of it all my own, should it ever be of use to me. You will find it worth reading,—one of the most flagrant gentleman that Zimmermann,* just going off into ultimate real insanity when he did this feat, and that of the still madder *Fragments on Frederick* which followed.

I haggle along here, in my old way; much like a man doomed to *cobble shoes* (the dreariest of enterprises, hope nowhere in it, except the hope of getting done with it): my progress is exceedingly below my intentions; in fact, is exceedingly bad; but I still persevere, tho' falling on my nose so often. Gee ho! Chick-Chick!—

. . . You can keep the *Zimmermann* for me, no hurry about it. I have got another superfluous Book (duplicate or nearly so) of *Anecdotes* about Frederick;—seems to have been done at *Liverpool:* a Gift Book "to William Watt," my copy;—can it be your Boys' Grandfather! . . .

* Author of "Solitude."

LETTER 287

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 4 May, 1859.

My dear Brother— . . . Did not I *send* you Mill's Essay on *Liberty?* I meant it; and do not now find the Book here. In my life I never read a serious, ingenious, clear, logical Essay with more perfect and profound dissent from the basis it rests upon, and most of the conclusions it arrives at. Very strange to me indeed; a curious monition to me what a world we are in! As if it were a sin to control, or coerce into better methods, human swine in any way;—as if the greater and the more universal the "liberty" of human creatures of the *Swine* genus, the more fatal all-destructive and intolerable were not the "slavery" the few human creatures of the *Man* genus are thereby thrown into, and kept groaning powerless under. *Ach Gott im Himmel!* . . .

Adieu, in hot *haste,*

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 288

To Dr. Carlyle, Edinburgh.

Humbie,* 30 June, 1859.

My dear Brother—Jane got across safely on Tuesday; met by me at Burntisland towards 4; all right,—tho' *none* of the Letters had gone its appointed course any more than yours. We had barely got in here, when the rain, heartily for the second

* A farmhouse near Aberdour on the Forth opposite Edinburgh.

time, began its beneficent wetting. Jane has not been over the threshold at all since, though the weather to-day and yesterday afternoon, is at its very finest. She is very feeble, indisposed to locomotion, *ankles* so weak she can walk little; and I have not yet been able to rake up the least vestige of "side-saddle," not to speak of further vehiculatory apparatus. I rode to Kirkcaldy yesterday in quest; found Peter Swan prosperous and glad to see me, but in the saddlers' shops or otherwise, not even a hope of what I was wanting.* . . .

LETTER 289

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Humbie, 10 July, 1859.

Dear Jean—I am bound to put an end to your anxieties about the Cuddy adventure; † if I carry this to the Post to-night, which can be done by my last *outrake* now at hand, I believe you will get it to-morrow.

Know then that the Cuddy thus far seems to be a perfect success; and does promise, so far as two separate performances will indicate, to be a very great achievement in this household. Something like *a pair of legs* to the poor Missus; for really there seemed no outlook of locomotion for her otherwise!

The boy went across on Friday; and returned successfully

* In a day or two a side-saddle was found, and Carlyle writes to his brother: "With a mighty effort, I yesterday at last got poor Jane mounted on my horse (for you have no idea how weak and timorous she is); I led her successfully, however; and we made, thro' the shady wood, then by the village, shore, etc., a good ride which quite reassured her as to the horse's quality, and did her perceptible benefit."

† Carlyle had ordered an ass from Dumfriesshire for Mrs. Carlyle's use.

with the long-eared creature about 5 P. M. . . . Saturday, the day after his arrival, the first experiment was made, and to-day the second; Jane riding triumphantly, and the poor Beast doing his part in the most unexceptionable manner. He seems weakish and timid, she says, but willing, obedient; goes at a fair Cuddy pace; and she has not the least fear while on his back. Thanks, therefore, many kind thanks for the trouble you have all taken; which has been so essentially useful to us. I see not how we could have done otherwise at all: no such thing as a Cuddy appears to exist in these parts; many "bather Leddies," on Saturday, came eagerly about, asking Jane, "If that was a *hired* Donkey?"—"Oh no Ma'am, it is my own!" answered the envy of surrounding females with weak limbs.—. . .

LETTER 290

To John Forster, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Humbie, Aberdour, Fife, 10 July, 1859.

Dear Forster—We are greatly shocked and surprised to hear of the bad turn of health you have had; and proportionately thankful to Heaven, and the other Helps, that it is over again! I had intended, every day, for about a week before leaving Town, to call at Montague Square,—and there is a mad feeling in me (always till I reflect again) as if that omission had been the guilty cause of what followed! For the human conscience is sensitive, on some points, beyond what you perhaps suppose.

It seems to me, dear Forster, you ought to be out of London altogether, in this hot season, while the country is in all its

glory and the Town in all its noise and smoulder. Nay why not fling up your Office * altogether, if it tie you in any measure in respect of what is so all-important as the concern of Health? To you no Office is of the least practical moment; yields neither distinction, nor real profit of any kind;—nor does your pleasure lie, I think, in that direction, tho' probably some vague notion of "duty" may, as habit no doubt does. I pray you reflect seriously on this! To me the Country with its mere silence, purity, etc., is always about some 30 or 50 *per cent.* on the right side of the balance as to health. I am seriously minded, if I ever live to get done with this undoable Book, to be actually off, and quit the horrors of Babel and *its* ugly Nebuchadnezzars for a place of God Almighty's making! Besides one might have two places, and alternate,—change sides, like a fish getting fried, for the remainder of one's time.

It is very clear to me if I had you *here* just now, to ride two hours a-day with me among the silent Hills and Valleys, by the shore of the beautifullest sea in the world; bathing daily, living on country messes from the neat-handed Phyllis; and forgetting Bel and the Dragon, as if they were *already* in the Home full surely destined to them from all Eternity,—it seems to me you would feel yourself gathering strength again before a week were past. Tell Mrs. Forster of all this; and that my Wife has got a Cuddy (*anglice* Donkey), and begins to be happy. And that there are still Lodgings here; entire "Houses to let" (all but a corner into which the shivering natives squat); and that there are other Cuddies,—and that there is such a view, by sea and land, as was never seen before!—On the whole, practically,

* John Forster was at this time Secretary to the Commissioners in Lunacy.

write a word to us, dear Forster, and say exactly *how you are*, to ears interested. Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 291

To Dr. Carlyle, Edinburgh.

Auchtertool,* 22 August, 1859.

My dear Brother— . . . I have this morning written kindly to Erskine, giving up the speculation altogether. Indeed it was much luckier. I am in no mood for doing visits; for dressing, discoursing, screwing up mind or body in any way. Much better to lie here totally dormant, the idlest and most solitary of all mortals, till our term here arrive. That will come soon enough, when one *must* get on foot again.

"Jowett" has no charms for me; I saw Jowett twice over: a poor little good-humoured owlet of a body,—"Oxford Liberal," and very conscious of being so; not knowing right hand from left otherwise. *Ach Gott!*

I got home rapidly without the least damage on Saturday night. Sunday my *laziness* in the bright Earth was beyond expression; however, I *forced* a furious walk, and ditto ride out of myself, which did good. Yesterday I accompanied Walter [Welsh] to Kirkcaldy after all; Jane had appointed to go (shopping), and I, for the moment, was as one without employment. . . . Laziness, I rather believe, is the wholesome feeling for me; absolute *far-niente* the real rule at present. . . .

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

* The Carlyles had just left Aberdour and were staying for a while in the house of Mrs. Carlyle's cousin, the Rev. Walter Welsh, at Auchtertool in Fife.

LETTER 292

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Chelsea, 7 October, 1859.

My dear Brother—I have been in Scotland this long while; above three months in all, the last three weeks of it in Annandale;—and have often been thinking to write you a long Letter out of those old scenes, where at every turn the deep remembrance of you rose so fresh in me. I came home about a week ago; I find, in the confused weak state I have been in, my resolution of writing to you not yet fulfilled: but I set about fulfilling it *before* attempting any kind of *work* here. . . .

Last year was not a propitious one to me: I returned rather before this day of the month, out of Germany, as I think I then told you: and in a few days further I started the attempt to finish my miserable big Task, as it were by sheer force, and violently *cut* my way to the *end* of it. Alas, the attempt had no success with me. The attempt was itself an unwise one, could not well have succeeded in any case: moreover, I had got myself so smashed to pieces with that *sleepless* German Tour (the effects of which I still feel) that I was quite below par in health: —in short, I prospered worse and worse all through winter and spring, and made no real way at all; only in my obstinate persistence, like a man trying to *dig* though up to the neck in *mud*, grew stupider and stupider! Jane too was very weak; and in May got into the worst fit of illness I ever saw her have,—kind of *cold* caught then, in the burst of wild weather we had; but

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cold attended with such spasmodic pains, and such a degree of utter weakness as were alarming to behold. A Doctor of the neighbourhood, who forced her to *eat* a little, did her a great deal of good; that, I think, was his chief medicine, that of *eating;* on which followed *sleep* and other good things. Finding herself a little reinstated, tho' in such a state of feebleness, and seeing me so *bemired,* and far spent, she recommended "a long flight to solitude and sea-shore": so after much haggling we did take flight in the end of June,—to the shore of Fife (place called Aberdour, about four miles west of Burntisland, if you recollect those localities); . . . We did our best to be dietetic, quiet, *idle,* and to get good of Fife. . . . For the rest, I studied to have no company, or as little as possible; Fife was grown *old* and tragic to me; I passed my time, riding about, walking, diligently bathing, generally in a sombre silent mood. One day in Kirkcaldy I rode up the *Kirk Wind,* saw the old room where we two lodged together long ago,*—the staircase, window, etc., seemed all *younger* rather than otherwise, in their bright new colouring of lime and paint, but the Two Lodgers had not been growing younger the while! Kirkcaldy is still a flourishing place; and Peter Swan (whom you may remember as a little black-eyed boy), now an old bachelor, inclined to corpulency, is the chief man of the place. All new-paved, old *Jail* quite swept away; screaming with railways, etc., etc.: a place I had no pleasure in re-surveying.

Down in Annandale, at Scotsbrig, I met Jack; in Scotsbrig you know what sad change has occurred in the first days of June; poor Isabella carried to her last home, after long years of sickli-

* Alexander Carlyle attended his brother's school for a term or two and lodged with him at Mrs. Skene's in the street called Kirkwind.

ness and suffering, the last month and week of which had been tragically severe! . . .

Poor Jamie: we went to the Ecclefechan Kirkyard together, one day, and spent a few silent minutes, which could not be other than solemn. There they all lay, so still and dumb those that were once so blithe and quick at sight of us: gathered to their sleep under the long grass:—I could not forbear a kind of sob, like a child's out of my old worn heart, at first sight of all this. . . .

Dear Brother, I am got to the end of my second sheet, and must close this rambling account; without almost a word addressed from *my*self to *your*self! You know all that I could say, without a word spoken on that head. Ah me, ah me! We have been young and now are old; and surely it is a blessing to us that we are *thus* still together! If I live to get done with my Book, I will write to you *then;* I mean to work no more in this world then!

Your Letter came,—as you know? God bless you all, my ever-dear Brother, T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 293

To John Forster.

Chelsea, 26 October, 1859.

Dear Forster—Your Letter was a bright little phenomenon here; and brought us reminiscences and prospects of a pleasant nature,—news even new to *us,* for we see hardly anybody, and hear of little that is passing in these foggy times.

For the rest, we are in tolerable heart; and can give rather a good account of ourselves, in answer to your kind enquiries.

My Wife decidedly gained strength in the second half of our rustication;—the first half was passed by the sea-side; the second in a Country House some miles inland; a much better *lodging* this latter, which suited the female nerves ("excellent quiet place, so roomy and airy")—and there began an evident improvement. Which I am happy to say, still lasts; some visible increase of strength, sleep, etc.; and better omens to face the coming Winter with. Alas, there is nothing yet to brag of; far enough from that; but one is thankful for never so little.

As to me I did no farther good after quitting my friend the Sea: but I went dreaming about, doing nothing, at least; in that way my heart-breaking Prussian Concern (comparable to poor Christian's "Burden" in the *Pilgrim's Progress*) lay in abeyance; so that I could, in some slight degree, better *see* it, and judge a little where (if anywhere) the true handles of it might be groped for. In fine, I too, feel slightly (very slightly) better, or fancy myself so; and am at work again, daily with what strength I have left, on that thrice-disgusting Business,—much wishing I were either dead or else had done with it! In which humble alternative I hope to be indulged, one way or the other, by the Upper Powers and the Under! Pity me, dear F.; you may really, if you are benignly given: I never in all my life—But in short I have a kind of hope to begin printing about Newyear's day, and to be chased thro' it in perhaps a twelvemonth if I can live so long.

Poor Hunt, poor Stephen! The ranks are getting thin to one's right and to one's left:—it is an evident suggestion, "Close, then; rank closer, and stick to one another, ye that still stand!"

We are delighted to hear of Macready's Cheltenham purpose: my Wife says it will lift a choking incubus, and shadow

of death, from himself and his. *Ut fiat.*—Poor Landor, with his white beard; with his strong old heart! If you ever write to him, say I am still true (backed by my Wife); and know *better* than the rumouring Newspapers and barking Doggery of this world!—I wish Craik were in his Principalship; I too can be of little help. When you go to Dickens, our best regards. *Tale of Two Cities* is wonderful! Adieu, dear F.; our duty to the Lady. Come and see me whenever you return.—

Yours ever,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 294

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Chelsea, 13 April, 1860.

My dear Alick—The other night John read to me a Letter of yours to Jean, which had been sent hither from Dumfries for our use; and was very welcome after the long silence. You give us there a fine lively account of your dear Household over the Sea; the whole matter came home to me, and I thought of you my Brother ever true to me, and far away, struggling handsomely on, tho' growing old, like others of us: in short it brought up such a vivid picture of the present and the past, and was so wholesome and agreeable in its simplicity of truth, I privately determined to go and do at once a thing I had long intended, but had put off for want of time,—namely to send you the Bit of Paper which is now here inclosed, as a small memorial of my regard for you which will live as it ought so long as I live. Dear Brother, you may believe me, it is years since I had such a pleasure as in sending you this little gift.

It will *ditt* up some little hole in your establishment perhaps, and keep the wind out, as if by command, "Brother Tom's" command; and no man can be more welcome to a thing than Brother Alick is to this.—I am not now so scarce of money as I used to be, nor indeed scarce at all within the last few years; we have, on the contrary, an *increasing* stock, with the *diminishing* time left to use it in: pray *remember* this always; and never scruple to *apply* to me in any pinch,—you know that I literally mean what I say, and that I should not say it if it were not the truth. It has been in my head for a long time to write to you about Tom, my namesake; of whom, on all that I could gather and guess, I have a good opinion; and who seems to be struggling towards some settlement for his own behoof, as is natural at his age, but not successfully hitherto. If you can see any way for him that could be opened by a £200 or so, and that promised to be for his real good and yours, I wished you to tell me about it. I am so held to the grindstone, and almost slaved to wreck with this sad Book of mine, I have seldom a moment of my own for any purpose: but I wish you would consider this thing, now that I have got it stated, and if you come to any conclusion, let me know instantly. It is very possible you may not wish Tom himself to know of this at all; if so, be only silent; the secret lies between you and me, and shall *so* lie till you permit otherwise. Again I say we are not now scarce of money, nor like to be: my late Books have sold beyond common; the British Public, after having tried in vain to starve me into compliance or death, now renounces the attempt, and says, "Live!"—now when one has so near done with it at any rate! I cannot say I care for any Public, or man or body of men that are so loose

from me. That *is* a kind of Kingship I have attained to by their treatment of me,—and by stern Time's treatment withal, who spares no mortal. Pray understand all this, dear Brother; and *act* accordingly when there is reason you should—namely *good* to be done to you or yours by so doing. And so enough on that subject.

. . . Adieu dear Brother. God's blessing on you all.

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 295

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 30 May, 1860.

Dear Sister—I am very greatly pleased that you have applied to me for poor old Mary Tait * again: I have many times thought she must surely be in need of some help I could offer her; but was always till now denied the opportunity. Inclosed is £5, which you are to dispose of for her,—in your most judicious but also most *liberal* manner. Let her have tobacco what she can set her face to; also tea, etc., anything you can observe her to be in want of: she shall have more money whenever you inform me that this is done.—

I have long wished to ask you also about poor Johnnie Grier: is not he quite broken down; thought to be dying; and in great poverty, etc.? I suppose it is because you do not think money could be advantageously laid out on him that you have either not spoken, or not spoken favourably of any projects in that kind. Consider it; and answer me more distinctly. . . .

* Mrs. Grierson, née Mary Tait: the widow of an uncle of Carlyle's (by marriage), Grierson of the Grove.

LETTER 296

To the Same.

Thurso Castle, Thurso,* 6 August, 1860.

Dear Sister—. . . This is a very pleasant wholesome place, and certainly one of the *quietest* in all the world. A queer old mansion, nothing of the Castle in it but four or five little *extinguisher* towers about the corners; built close to the Northern Ocean, which never goes a gunshot off, but moans perpetually and sounds among its rocks close under one of my windows here: a biggish House taken altogether; well done up, well furnished and managed; the people all in the highest degree zealous to accommodate the surprising monster who has been stranded among them. I have one of the desirablest nice rooms in the world, looks out upon Thurso chimney-tops one way, and upon the great Ocean the other: from cocks, Carpenters, Hackney-cabs, what a change! . . .

LETTER 297

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 19 November, 1860.

My dear Brother—. . . I was glad to hear anything definite of poor Dr. Irving's son, whom I remember as a lad, but had never heard the ulterior of;—I hope Constable may publish the *History of Scottish Poetry* you speak of; which is

* The residence of Sir George Sinclair, whose guest Carlyle was for about five weeks this summer.

likely to be of use in that department. The qualities you recognise in it are much what I should have expected: the hard gritty Doctor was a solid man; whose information was apt to be good, where he pretended to have any. Now that I remember, I will ask you to give Laing my compliments; he too is a man of some worth in his province. We got a Book (one of the many Books, I think it is Boswell's) on *The Douglas Cause,* not long since; and were reading it: I wonder if the *Signet Library* (should one survive, and have liberty to read for amusement!) has got all the Books on that *Douglas Cause?* This of Boswell's, which is merely the spoken opinions of all the Judges, leaves one quite in doubt as to the Yes or No of spurious birth. But another Book, a Pamphlet which Gilchrist lent me, consisting of Letters *from Lady Jane* (the professed Mother) *to her Husband,* many of them dated "Chelsea," and nearly all addressed to "The rulers of the King's Bench Prison,"—nearly altogether convinced me that *spuriousness* was inconceivable, on the part of two such persons, especially on her part; and have left with me the notion of looking into "the 1,200 quarto pages" of Evidence, some day when I can lay hold of that Publication, and have *time* for such a recreation,—alas!

Our Printing goes on here, and my writing, and puddling and jumbling with intent to write (one of the horriblest operations ever known): we do not stop; but our rate is very slow. It is only a week ago that Book II. (Book XII. properly) was fairly got into; and of *it* nothing at all is yet *quite* done. If my sleeping talent, or some other indispensable one, do not quite desert me, I do count on holding on till finis; and seldom fall into the desperate view of things. My head keeps sounding

many tunes; continually at it, sometimes loud as a pair of bagpipes, sometimes low and more melodious like the gush of infinite waters thro' an infinite colander: but the dirty *top-heavy* feeling, which was attended with pain if I trotted, or otherwise *shook* my poor head, is pretty much, and sometimes nearly altogether, away; and, in a divided manner (cut in four, for most part) I generally get an allowance of sleep that is tolerable hitherto. Stand to it: *wir heissen euch hoffen*. . . .

LETTER 298

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 19 May, 1861.

Dear Sister—. . . I am toiling along on the old terms; rather better, not rather worse: half of the job, and certainly the worst half, is as good as altogether off my hands: that is to say, Volume III. is nearly through the *Press* itself; and I am daily writing at Volume IV. and *last*,* which I always think (fond *hope* springing immortal in the human breast!) will be *easier* to do in some measure. Clear it is, if I can hold out a certain number of months more, I shall be out of the ugliest job I have ever in my life had to do;—and be perceptibly lighter *loaded* for the remainder of my appointed miles in this world! The Book promises to be *better*, too, than I ever thought it could have been. . . .

* It did not prove to be the last. There were six volumes in the first edition of *Friedrich*.

LETTER 299

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 25 August, 1861.

Dear Jean—I have barely a minute; but will send you the indications necessary. Poor T. C.'s* recovery of himself at Birmingham is an interesting fact; and I am truly glad to hear of it. "Uncle Frank" is to me also a very lively reminiscence. I recollect, as if yesternight, the last time he ever came to Mainhill, or that I ever saw him;—I suppose he himself thought it would perhaps be his last visit; for he had just risen from a dangerous illness;—however, he had dressed himself, in the pale Autumn afternoon, and came up with the two Boys, winding pensively along. He fell mainly to me, all hands being on the corn-rig; and was very amiable: "The German language!" he said, with goodnatured wonder, when I showed him the Book I was then intent upon. My *first* German Book;—and, as it happened, the History of Frederick's *Seven-Years War;* which now again so much concerns me, when I too am grown old! At crossing the burn (edge of "Calf-park"), he took one of the little Boys on his back, I helping with the other; and muttered something, "Poor things, I kenna what'll come of them, an I were gane!"—with a tone, I think altogether of tears (this was in returning in the dusk), which is deeply memorable to me.—I could do nothing for Tom in 1834, tho' I did try

* Thomas Carlyle, son of Carlyle's Uncle Frank. This Thomas and his brother John are the "two Boys" referred to further on in this letter.

this and that; and he owes me absolutely nothing.* Nor can I now do anything for him; nobody can,—except himself, by being wiser than he was. It is still time, now is the time, *now* and henceforth; the present and the future one still has.— . . .

LETTER 300

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 19 September, 1862.

My dear Brother—. . . I went to see some "Historical Miniatures," in the Brompton Boilers, one day, Tait accompanying (result *zero* or minus quantities); I rode to see Henry Taylor again (weariness of body very great, in the burning sunshine of going, and the violence of grey east-wind in returning):—on the whole, the one thing we have accomplished which is due to Jane withal, not to me except passively, is certain Photographs big and little;—of which you will get copies by and by. Jane had been talking of this business for years past: † at Edinburgh latterly she found on sale, and going off at a great rate, some unpleasant scrubb of a thing ("came from Dumfries, Mem," said the stationer; "we thought it had been like!")—which had set her quite on edge on the matter. So, under guidance of Woolner, and a selected chief Artist ‡ here, there is now coming out a genuine article, which will cut up the Dumfries traitor,—and set us all at rest on that side of our affairs. Highly important to think of!—In about ten days,

*Carlyle also tried to get a situation for his cousin Tom in 1835. See "Letters of Thomas Carlyle," ii. 381.

† *Cf.* Letter 229, "New Letters and Memorials."

‡ Mr. Jeffray, Oxford St.

I should imagine, there will be copies lying for Jean and you. Jean need not fret in the very least; only know her Dumfries Artist for a dishonourable scout in time coming.

I do not think I can stand the Exhibition at all,—especially under Tait to-morrow. To-morrow seems to be my last chance; and I rather grudge (tho' not much either) to miss the Pictures: the huge miscellany of *remainder*, it is like a *dinner* of a hundred acres in extent presented to a dyspeptic individual, who needs one mutton-chop, and is not ravenous even for that;—I know nothing in the world of a more distractive, overwhelming and distressing nature. . . .

LETTER 301

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

The Grange, Alresford, 17 Oct., 1862.

Dear Jean— . . . We came hither last Saturday, are to stay till to-morrow,—one week of perfect inaction and rural exposure: it is the only taste of country I have had for a year past. It has not been wholly unpleasant, tho' somewhat mournful and confused to me;—so many changes done by fleeting Time in these localities as elsewhere, since I knew them first! Our weather has been very unsteady, seldom without some beauty; and I have had a spell or two of very rapid riding,—upon blood horses on country downs, far beyond my pace in the London neighbourhoods. Yesterday (Thursday) was one of the beautifullest days of the year: we went driving a 14 miles to *Hursley*, the place where Oliver Cromwell's Son Richard got his Wife, and lived during all his young years (his Wife herself *all* her years, being born lady [of it]): it is now for 150 years past in the pos-

session of other people; but there are many Cromwell *remains* there, Letters of Cromwell's, very genuine, a Portrait (imaginary) etc., etc.: a very pretty place, and very polite people; so that in the fine weather and fine drive, we did very well. . . .

The Lord and Lady* are going for Nice directly; nothing can exceed their friendliness and hospitality to my Helpmate and me. Helpmate seems to like it better than I! We go home to-morrow, positive as per bargain.— . . . .

Ever affectionately yours,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 302

To Dr. Carlyle, Edinburgh.

Chelsea, 4 December, 1862.

My dear Brother— . . . Thanks for your industry about the Jane Johnston affair. Now that I can spell her name properly ("D'Otthenir," is it not? and "23 Northumberland Street"),—I may send the Books as Christmas Gift, or how I like, when there is time to write a little Note. But do you go and make some acquaintance with her, in the interim or afterwards, for your own sake and mine. There is something strange and pathetically pleasant to me in the recollection of that little Bonnet at "Tom Donaldson's,"† in "the Brick House," at the

* The late Louisa Lady Ashburton,—Lord Ashburton having married again in November, 1858.

† Tom Donaldson's school, at Ecclefechan, was the first Carlyle attended. In a note of 1866 he says of Tom: "A severely correct young man, Tom; from Edinburgh College, one session probably; went afterwards to Manchester, etc., and I never saw his face again, tho' I still remember it well, as always merry and kind to me, tho' harsh and to the ill-deserving severe." [*MS.* note on Althaus's German Memoir of Carlyle.]

distance of 60 years! You can tell her they asked me, when I came home, the first day, "Who was the nicest lassie?" To which I answered without hesitation, "Jean Johnston,"—but had a great deal of quizzing to stand, which I had not the least expected. This day is my 67th birthday. Time, Death, Eternity: what an *element* this is that all of us have! We are such stuff as dreams are made of; and our little life is rounded with a sleep!—In my utter solitude I live much in these contemplations; which are not joyous, but perhaps better, and have a grandly quieting character, and lift one above the world and its beggarhoods. If I were only done with my Book! But really now it is getting to be high time. My weariness of it, occasionally, no tongue can tell; at other times I am rather pleased to feel myself shaping, according to ability, so long as I live, something cosmic and true out of the chaotic mendacious and unknown. Oh that I had done with it, *done!*—

. . . Ruskin is home for three weeks from Savoy; but is going back to set up house there: we have seen him twice, —once with a Sir Walter Trevelyan and Wife, who I think are of your acquaintance. Wife a kind of wit, not unamiable, and with plenty of sense; man a strangely silent, placidly solemn old gentleman in lengthy black wig. Knows Erskine too;—my kind regards to Erskine! It is time I had ended this. It is 11 P. M. and Jane gives order "Out!" The *garroting* is more a terror and a rumour than anything very practical. But I do generally leave my watch; carry a thick stick, and keep a sharp eye in these night walks.

Adieu, dear Brother; I will add a word to-morrow.

T. C.

LETTER 303

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 6 January, 1863.

Dear Sister Jean—Accept this little Gift, in memory of the year just past, and in prospect of the one now to come. We have surely been *mercifully* dealt with, as our dear Mother used to say! Often when I look around me, and witness the courses of this world, I am filled with a kind of pious terror; and am ready to denominate myself, as I have heard people do in old days, a "Monument of Mercy." That is true in spite of all the sorrows and the fightings one has.

I may surely now and then indulge myself with the hope of getting a sight of you again, this year; but I *promise* myself nothing,—let me only fight along towards doing my own part of the matter, while permitted. Seeing or not seeing, I know the affection you, and all the others, regard me with at all times; and truly it is among my principal possessions still left me. To say and pray, All good be with you, is a very natural thing: it is saying All good be with *myself* too.

We continue both of us in tolerable health; Jane taking always rather well with *heat*, almost at any price. . . .

Ever your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 304

To Dr. Carlyle.

Chelsea, 26 November, 1863.

My dear Brother—Thanks for your pleasant little Note; I do not deserve a long one. All this week and last I have been

in *quagmire* up to the throat,—with that beautiful Book, as usual. Struggling as if for dear life:—thank Heaven, I did get my foot on the hard again, this afternoon before the Horse came: . . . it is some little dexterity of hand, which I find to have *deserted* me, that mainly creates those miserable stoppages. I must endeavour to *ride* diligently, to "be very regular," etc., etc.: in fine, I must endeavour to *get done;* that is pressingly necessary to me! They are about publishing the 4th Volume ; a Portrait of Wilhelmina (which I got from Usedom *) is to be Frontispiece: Larkin takes all the charge. I stand out for *finishing* the 5th Volume before January; the 6th before the end of June. I wish we saw it, as the blind man said!— . . .

Good night, dear Brother,

T. C.

LETTER 305

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 11 December, 1863.

My dear Brother—We are in considerable distress and confusion here;† but since to-day and yesterday I strive to be in hopes it is diminishing. Yesterday Dr. Blakiston from Hastings (who is skilful and full of kindness to Jane, but noisy and loquacious) came up, with Bessie,‡—a most kind *semi*-volunteer movement—for the purpose of seeing her, and holding a consultation with Barnes. He confirms Barnes in every particular:

* Count von Usedom, of the Isle of Rügen, with whom and his Lady (a Dumfriessshire woman), Carlyle had staid for a week in August, 1858.

† Owing to the street accident to Mrs. Carlyle. See *Reminiscences*, i. 210, *et seq.*

‡ Bessie Barnet, their first servant at Cheyne Row; now Dr. Blakiston's wife.

indeed the case seems medically plain,—nothing wrong internally, but the irritation, restlessness, pain and nervous weakness very great. I send you B's "Diagnosis," which he had written for me, and came stamping up to my garret with, after his consultation. Send the Paper back, after you have read it. *Before* he came (by the aid of opiates or otherwise) poor Jane was considerably easier, and I think evidently continues so to-day: but she is so low, one can get little out of her own account. I seldom get above a word or two, hardly audible even with industry, and little elucidation of her state. Never before have I seen her in such misery so long. She does, I believe, sleep a little latterly; she also eats *better* (which is still very *ill*),—is to try a fraction of minced mutton to-day; seems to affect nothing, but lemonades, small bits of *ice* (a bundle of *it* lies always in the back-area, under hay), soda-water and milk, etc. A sick-nurse (Irish "sister-of-mercy," with *Blarney* in her, which may be useful too) sits up with her all night; Maggie * she would not have, nor her own maid: Maggie nurses thro' the day, and does cheerily whatever she can. We keep down noise all we can; but there is of course a good deal of jingling about, which cannot be prevented outside her doors. I do pray and hope the worst may now be past.

I myself, which is a mercy, am tolerably well; and even manage, all thro' the hurlyburly, to get some work done. *My* one consolation. The fall of my Horse † has set me upon *for-*

* Maggie Welsh, Mrs. Carlyle's cousin.

† Fritz, who had fallen on all fours in Regent's Park in the preceding February. Poor Fritz rose again instantly before Carlyle had dismounted; but his knees were injured and his reputation gone. Carlyle's next horse, a little Arab, presented by Lady Ashburton, was called "Noggs."

bearing carefully the high-trot (at which he never was good, and was suspected even before he fell); . . .

Send Jean this, and Jamie.—Ever yours,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 306

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 10 January, 1864.

Dear Jean—You, and those dear to me, and to whom I am dear, ought to at once be made partakers of my little gleam of good luck!—

The poor Soul had at last two hours of good sleep last night, and generally a "much quieter" night; she admits this morning (she for the *first time,* and dare not yet without *buts* and doubts, poor creature) that she is a *kenning* better! The rest of us all hope now that we are fairly *round,*—tho' taught by former experience, we will not anticipate *un*interrupted progress, and will be content with the slowest rate of *speed.* . . .

LETTER 307

To His Wife, Care of Dr. Blakiston, St. Leonards.

Chelsea, 9 March, 1864.

Oh my poor little Darling!—You behaved like a heroine yesterday, firm to your purpose; and surely it was a blessing you got the journey done, instead of waiting,—till to-day, for instance. How quiet you were, and clear and calm: my dear little suffering woman!—

I *saved* my train,* by probably the nearest miss even I ever made. Two seconds more would have been fatal to it! I saw no carriage or omnibus; missed the road a little (quite at the end); and had to come in at a *run*, shouting like "stop thief!"—I got home in good time; found a good fire, etc.: but, alas, a house *too* silent, and gone all into the *gaunt* mood to one's poor sunk heart. If I could have burst into a passion of tears, it would have been some relief. I finished off my Proof; and went timefully to bed. For Maggie [Welsh] there was the enclosed Letter; and this morning for self the enclosed Mrs. Kemble's: I have not asked *her* to call on you.

Oh if I could hear some good news of my poor Jeannie's *sleep* to-morrow morning! I try to live in hope. Surely, surely the *shaking* and the change will do something for us.—I think perhaps you will have to get a house of your own? But you need do nothing rashly.—God keep my Darling for me. Amen.

T. C.

LETTER 308

To His Wife, 117 *Marina, St. Leonards.*

Chelsea, 13 May, 1864.

My poor little Jeannie, I hope, has slept *better* last night; and if so, this good May day may be further of benefit,—at least, pleasanter to drive in. I got John's Letter last night, but not till eleven o'clock, our oblivious maid having left it in the letter-box till then. Of course I am very glad that you have got a Craik settlement on the favourable terms.† Maggie

* Home from St. Leonards. See *Reminiscences*, i. 224.

† *I.e.*, arranged satisfactorily with Miss Mary Craik to stay as companion, etc.

[Welsh] waits your permission to attend me to-morrow, and stay till *Wednesday:*—I hope you will let her come? She is abundantly diligent here; and keeps the gloom of the House from settling on me.

For the rest we are up to the chin in wreck and pother; the Books are all packed,—Larkin to ascertain if *they* cannot be sent this night, and got to arrive on Saturday as soon as *we!* To-morrow at 12 we actually vanish hence (unless something occur), and shall be with you at the hour John and I arrived. Oh poor Darling, I wish I could do you any good by my coming! But at least you will have the comfort, as I shall, of our being all together again: that is always something. . . .

Thank John for his two Notes; let him have the groom waiting to-morrow! Good bye Dearest, till then.—Your T. C.

LETTER 309

To His Wife, Care of Dr. Russell, Thornhill.

Chelsea, 3 August, 1864.

Oh my poor little Woman, it is indeed terrible. Night after night, the "wakeful sleep" itself gone, nothing but miserable vigilance, and the desperate unrest you have been so long used to! Would I might hope to-morrow for news of a *second* sleep following: but I dare not hope yet;—tho' every circumstance as you say is in your favour, were it not for your own poor nervous system ruined (for the present), not by these late months only, but by long years of more or less the like. . . . Nevertheless, I by no means permit you or myself to despair. No; I seem even to discern some rays of fluctuating hope (real

tho' fitful) even in your present state: Hold on, hold on! Try all that you can by diet, by study to your *best* of what hurts and what answers;—that clearly is the one strength we have; but that also is a thrice important. The *centre* of all: consider it so. Dr. Russell will do and forbear what the kindest and wisest of Doctors attainable on the Earth would! Quinine (or Jesuits' Bark simple) is the hopefullest drug I ever heard of to you: so too, I daresay, he thinks; but gives it over too, while you object (which also I reckon wise altogether). Perhaps you may come back on it again.—Oh what is my poor Woman doing at this hour (this warm, still August day,—which *here* would be very hot for horses and her at 3 P. M.)? Oh that I might *believe* that you have had some sleep, driving through those old scenes, so full of *prophetic* and supernal thoughts looking behind and before! I will pray for a Letter. I have not answered Froude; I shudder to answer anybody, on a subject so indifferent to *him* in comparison. Indeed I have not spoken a word to anybody these three days.

Geraldine has and shall have nothing to do with the "Papering" or any of our affairs.* Indeed she handsomely keeps silent and away.

I am better than yesterday; still not quite up to par. The noises have considerably increased about me; but I care much less about them, in general: Night always brings her coolness, her silence deep as could be,—which is an infinite solace to me, body and *soul*. . . . My work has been *intense* to-day; but far from brilliantly successful. But I do make progress, nearly daily,—*altogether* daily, I may say, tho' not always visible

* Mrs. Carlyle had written (2d August); "Above all, do not let Geraldine interfere,—*she* has the least taste of any woman I know."

daily. Oh if I but had my Jeannie again! But Patience, there too, and Hope, hope! *At spes infracta.* God bless thee, Darling. T. C.

LETTER 310

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 24 September, 1864.

My dear Brother—I yesterday sent your Letter to Jane; I find to-day she decides to accept your proffered assistance,*—which is a bit of very comfortable news, among the others she sends which are rather below average to-day.

I can give no advice about the Trains, the Night-or-Day question, or any practical point at all: of course she, you and Dr. Russell will with your best light consider all these things;—and I need not advise you (what will double and treble the kindness, and is perhaps really the difficult part) to be gentle, *patient*, and *soft* and yielding in all respects, as towards a creature *without skin*, in a manner! This you already well know, I am aware; and will, without counsel of mine, do your very best in: it will be the greatest favour I can get at present from anybody living.

I shall not grudge much your troublesome journey, if you *are* really for the Continent. A day or two of you here will be a great treat to me, and I shall not grudge a little loss of time;—before winter quite come (before December *end*, surely!) I shall be ready for any amount of roving and recreating, if things only go well! . . .

Your affectionate Brother,

T. Carlyle.

* In convoying Mrs. Carlyle home.

LETTER 311

To His Wife, Care of Dr. Russell, Thornhill.

Chelsea, 27 September, 1864.

Rather better news, Dear; but still so bad! I say to myself, How gladly would *she* send me good if she had them, poor suffering soul!—But come, we must not aggravate the bad prospect to ourselves. It is no wonder, as Jean says, that you are "black *based*" (abased, it was a phrase of my Mother's) "at such a journey lying ahead": but the real likelihood is, it will pass without essential damage to you, perhaps without more pain than you suffer in your chair there;—and you will get to me "on Saturday morning about ten" (John says, who seems in the best disposition, poor soul); and find *me* at last, and what "home" we have in this vexed Earth: true to one *another*, while we stay here! The House is quite ready; really clean and bright; your bedroom (Mary* sleeping in it, every night, and a fire to *be*, on and after this night), a fine white room *without* pictures; drawing room *ditto*, and looks a good deal *bigger;* † chintzes all fresh,—and *heart* still fresh, my own poor heavy-laden little woman! The weather is settled *dry* (not the least fog visible now), and the nights not so cold but you can easily defend yourself: . . . Come, Darling; pluck up, I know you will! Mary can make you excellent coffee, ditto tea (Fortnum & Mason's); you can have excellent white bread of hers (if you don't prefer the brown

* One of the servants.

† Mrs. Carlyle's bedroom and the drawing-room had been, at her request, newly painted, papered, etc., in her absence.

as I do), and there is always Addiscombe *butter* extremely good. . . .

Oh may you *sleep*, sleep till then; and arrive to me unhurt! Dr. Russell, whose sound human sense in regard to all these matters is so conspicuous to me, and such a blessed *novelty* in the business, speaks what I have always felt about your disease; you *can* still eat and drink,—and you *must;* and that, so far as I can understand, is still more vital than sleep itself.

I shall not be long with my Book now. I am just at present in what I always reckon the *worst* of all the Chapters in Part *Last;* and I have cut up, better than expected, to-day and yesternight. For the rest, no news whatever. . . . It is striking *four;* I had to send Noggs and his Boy-Groom off again (so belated with my Sheets). Noggs is standing with his tail to the manger, impatiently expecting me. God bless you, Dearest. T. C.

LETTER 312

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 1 March, 1865.

My dear Brother—I would have written to you on Friday; but your Letter, for which I was much obliged, found me just in the act of mounting *Noggs;*—after which till Monday there was no chance. On Monday I had engaged myself to Denmark Hill, for Ruskin's superb mineralogical collection and a free discourse upon the same:—an adventure that proved pleasant enough while it lasted, but which had considerably lamed me for business on the day following. You see how my poor hand shakes even now;—I have been sending Forster's Books home

to him; oh what a grovelling in London dust, and bundling and tying, there has been with London Library, with one and the other (Forster's now for finis) with all that!

For the rest I am the idlest of all mankind; feel as if I had not only got done with *Friedrich*,* but with all the work I had to do in this Planet. A gloomy but quiet *collapse* there is, in mind and body;—a world left very *vacant* in comparison, and much less lovely to me than it once was. I know not whether I am quite at the bottom of the process: but it is curious to see how the *liver* and all things take a *new* and revolutionary course, and say each in its own dialect, "We have done, then, Master; haven't we?"—I do nothing but ride a little, walk a little, and read any supportable thing I can find. I don't feel as if there were much of *ruined* in me; but everything is in such a smashed and completely tired out condition as never before. In particular this right hand (the left *not* yet) has for about two years back taken to *shaking* at a new and unpleasant rate; especially shakes if I have been muscularly working at any thing. It must take its own way!—

. . . I am determined to see the Spring skies somewhere *without* London defilement.—Jane is pretty well; diligent in *driving*. I often wish *you* were accessible to me somewhere.— . . .

Yours ever, dear Brother,

T. Carlyle.

* Carlyle had written on the 4th of February: "My Printer was to have sent me the last sheet this morning; but has not done it, has put it off till night; which I like quite as well. . . . I will finish him *off* on Monday, I think. . . . I have endless things to sort and sweep away. I have even to have my hair cut; nay even to have my beard *clipt*,—both of which have been neglected this long time."

LETTER 313

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 26 April, 1865.

My dear Brother—Thanks for the Notes (last of them this morning), for the *Saturday Review*, etc. The latter I found really entertaining in a degree,—and greatly superior to some balderdash of the *Times* which Miss Jewsbury left here one day; and which was totally enigmatic to me till I heard incidentally that the creature who wrote it was *given to drink*, and had (as I then saw) gone at it raging *drunk!* Sordid *canaille* will be canaillish; why not?—

The thing I write about to-day, is to tell you that I find myself still with a £2,000 to invest; and should be privately glad of your advice about it. Chorley (*apropos* of my American outstandings) was, the other day, recommending the *Indian Guaranteed* (something); "*Government* responsible for it, interest on the very border of 5%, etc.," said Chorley: price was only about £101 per 100 and 5 *was* the per cent.; but I heeded him little, not knowing at the time that I *had* still to invest.—Pray give me advice about this "India" or whatever be the advisablest.

I am beginning to think of being off* about May 10: but I have not written to Jean yet, to fix the day. Pray send her the Photograph when you write.—"Bust"† still a botheration

* To Dumfries.

† On April 12th, Carlyle wrote (to Dr. Carlyle): "I am tied up till the end of this week, by a daily journey to Welbeck Street, and dull session of two hours there, under the sculptural manipulation of Woolner,—who, it does not appear to me, will make a Bust of much resemblance to me at the end of the job!"

to me: hang *it!* But I have now only two sittings and this day!

Adieu dear Brother,

Yours ever,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 314

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Scotsbrig, 6th August, 1865.

My dear Brother—I came down into these parts in the end of May, with a view of resting myself, and trying for a little recovery of strength and health, after the long deadly tug of pulling (12 years long!) at that last Book of mine. Hitherto I do not feel as if the operation had been very successful; I have had a great deal of bother about *sleep*, etc., and often enough have been low and dreary in this dear old Birthland now so changed and solitary to me: but perhaps on getting home, I shall really find that I have got some little benefit;—at any rate the thing had to be done; for almost five years past I have always been saying to myself, "Were this sad labour finished, I will see poor old Annandale again and the friends I still have there!"—Most of my time has been spent at the Gill, which was the quietest and much the loneliest place, where indeed I was left almost altogether to myself, to saunter about with such thoughts as rose in my own head, and the sorrow and gloom of one's mind could get its full length and be *as sorrowful* as it liked. The truth is I am much worn out; also very old; and ought now to know well that the *end* cannot and even should not be far off.

For the last two weeks I have been at Scotsbrig; am for

Edinburgh in the course of two days. (John who is at Dumfries all this while, has appointed to accompany me thither). In and about Edinburgh we calculate to loiter perhaps a fortnight more; after which I am for home again,—there to set my house in order a little, and see what farther I will do. Before leaving Scotsbrig I had long resolved to send you some kind of Letter dated there; and this at last is it,—in spite of a *shaking* hand and other impediments which render writing disagreeable to me just now. I enclose a Photograph which represents me pretty truly, well on in my 70th year:—your Photograph I have safe in my bedroom at Chelsea, and a great treasure to me it is (very recognizable to me, and not so changed as one might expect); . . .

Our kindred here may be described as going on in a singularly equable manner; prosperous all of them, rather than otherwise; and being spared hitherto in the constant ravagings of Time. In Ecclefechan there are hardly three people alive whom I can remember at all from my young years. A country changed wholly; nothing but the old *localities* now left;—the sight of which has been a continual interest to me, sad and strange, in my ridings up and down. Day before yesterday, for instance, I rode by Sandbed, Whins, etc., and home by "Jean's Bar" ("Jean" quite vanished with much else): at Sandbed I remembered to have passed the place, on some Mainhill Pony, almost fifty years ago; under the quiet sky, in the old house still standing, poor old Sandbed was making worship, and I heard the sound of his psalm; only once since, in a drive you once took me from Ecclefechan, could I remember to have passed that place. Ah me, ah me!—

Jamie has grown old, grave and sad, in comparison with for-

merly; but for the rest, is prosperous and diligent in the *new* mode of Husbandry now introduced in these parts,—that is to say in raising cattle and sheep at higher and higher prices, for the Liverpool and other manufacturing stomachs; that of *grain*-husbandry being almost wholly abandoned by those that have a little *money* for shifting into the new course. Grain (such the extent of import from Foreign Countries) was never seen so cheap in man's memory, nor Butcher's meat, etc., a third part so dear. . . .

Yesterday I was at Craigenputtock (Jamie and I, by railway and gig, from Scotsbrig and back): ah me, what a place of reminiscences for both of us, for me much more! There it lay, the poor old scene; sleepy, overgrown with wood and indolent neglect: the Tenant, one *Common*, pays just about your old rent (Jamie tells me) and mutton is three times the price, and wool about four, that you were used to! So that Common lives in new clover; and being an idle fellow, roams the country and leaves things at home a good deal to themselves. Whitsunday come a year he will have to walk his ways, and very much alter all that! We found your old Cattle-house, still *standing* by the wood-side in the hollow, *walls* still standing entire, roof long since gone; for the rest, solitude, silence, and innumerable thoughts that no words could really utter. God forever bless you, my dear and faithful Brother. We are widely parted in this world, but while *alive*, nothing can entirely part us. With blessings and regards to Jenny, Tom and everybody,

Your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 315

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 14 September, 1865.

My dear Brother— . . . Poor Alick, how touching his old Physiognomy * is to me here! His tenderness, the old vein of melancholy, of pathos and affectionate sorrow, this was always a trait that I loved in him. Doubly interesting in the fiery indignations and manifold sarcastic ruggednesses of a character like his. . . .

I am as *idle* as it is possible to be; merely reading (*Racine* chiefly in the shade of the backyard), musing many sad things, sad but quiet and very fit for the circumstances I am got into. My feet have not been so easy in their shoes for ten years back; my power of walking too is considerable, and this deliverance from the duty of riding is welcomer than you can possibly imagine! Jane is doing well, too; drives about unweariedly (about twice a week I go with her); and really seems to be *better* than we have seen her for a long time past. We are not without company either, indeed have more than I want; tho' the Town is said to be "empty altogether." Ruskin, Twisleton, Spedding, Forster (the last two just about departing); Froude too is coming soon, etc., etc.: in short there are *enough;* and seldom comes any one whom I could prefer to my *Racine* and the fresh air!— . . .

* Alick Carlyle had lately sent his photograph.

LETTER 316

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 23 November, 1865.

Thanks, dear Brother, for your patient and carefully considered Letter of this morning. My mind more and more inclines to "the first week of April"* for a good few reasons. *First* the whole matter will be quiet again, fallen dead and silent, nothing to rekindle but my bit of Speech. *Secondly*, I *may* be better (let us hope so, for at present I am oftenest truly helpless, weak as a sparrow, liver and nerves deeply *wrong*,—twelve years of that kind give one a right *thrashing*, especially when seventy is within a fortnight!)—at any rate I shall have better weather; shall *see* the matter more clearly from such distance, etc., etc. In short, on Saturday or Monday next (if Edinburgh say nothing and you say yes) I believe I shall decide it that way;—and then kick the affair mainly out of doors for a good while!— . . .

LETTER 317

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 5 December, 1865.

My dear Brother— . . . Last night very much against my will, we had to go to Forster's; F. himself (*ill of gout*) would take no denial: "Your birthday, Carlyle!" To set about rejoicing because one's seventieth year is done, would not have occurred to myself by any means: ah me, ah me! However, the

* For his Rectorial Address at Edinburgh.

thing went well enough, foolish as it was; and did not break my sleep. Browning was there, and one Dyce (an Aberdeen *Ex*-Shovelhat, huge grey man, very good natured) who lives upon Shakespear; no other except ourselves,—poor Jane says she always sleeps *better* after such a thing! On Friday (no help for that either!) we are to go to the Froudes: after *which*—except Fuz's Xmas (fixed weeks ago) let us hope there *is* nothing of that kind further in store! . . .

On Sunday Alfred Tennyson was here; had a dilapidated kind of look, but in talk was cheerful of tone; Woolner is his host: Woolner and he, with Froude and Stephen (meeting at the door, I suppose) were all here together; and I hastened to get them out into the Park, muddy and clammy as it was. Neuberg came in the evening; first time for many weeks: he is much older since you saw him last, and considerably deaf. "Two years" yet of Translation* ahead! Chorley is still *perdu*. "Professor Tyndall" (a great admirer, if you ever heard of him) has appeared again of late; really a cheery thoroughgoing man, and perfect in the newest news of the Chemical and Physical world. Our Stephen I think must be the *elder* † (a big heavy man of perhaps 33). . . . Oh, I ought to have mentioned that a certain Cork-cutter at Sunderland, "combining with a few other working men," sent me yesterday a fair enough copy of *Bewick's Birds*, "in honour of my seventieth birthday,"—poor souls, "after all!"

Adieu dear Brother, dear Friends all.

T. Carlyle.

* Of Carlyle's *Friedrich* into German.

† *I.e.*, older than his brother Leslie (now Sir Leslie) Stephen.

LETTER 318

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 9 January, 1866.

My dear Brother—I received your *Sentimental Journey;* many thanks. It will fill up some gap in the heavy Napier;—Jane too talks of reading it for *auld lang syne;* but her powers in that way, poor little soul, are greatly limited at present!

. . . Napier* is *clumsy* as you say; very heavy-hoofed, and slow, slow. But he is well-informed, credible on every point (which I never knew till now); and there is a fine fire of soldierhood in him,—tho' little *culture* that way in comparison to what I have been used to lately. He understands about fighting of Battles (what they call "tactic") well enough; but his notions upon *strategy* (or the *planning* and handling or campaigning part) are good for little,—Napoleon such a god with him. His endless details about Spaniard people and their fatuities I try all I can to skip (but cannot yet): in fact he knows still less about "Literature" than about strategy; and is not quite steady in grammar even. But I mean to read him all, finding him true. By the bye there has a Life of him (2 Voll. smallish 8vo.) come out lately by his Son-in-law, Bruce, M.P.†—not bad at all; which I have wholly: *yours* next, if you say the word. . . .

Your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

* General Sir William Napier, K. C. B., author of "History of the Peninsular War," etc.

† "Life of Sir W. Napier," by H. A. Bruce, M. P. John Murray, 1864.

LETTER 319

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 28 April, 1866.

Dear Sister—You will read these three Letters with a very melancholy interest;—especially the *one* of them I wrote from Scotsbrig the morning we left for Dumfries; and will regret with me to the end of your life that she did not see it;* alas, no; it was *not* posted at Ecclefechan by 6 P. M. in time for the morning mail at London; would come about 2 P. M. by which time she was gone *out*, never to return more. Oh why didn't I post it myself at Blackburn as I rode past; why did I wait for anything,—why did Jamie [Carlyle] junior make any delay in posting! But alas what is the use of such reflexions:—was not her own death caused by the hurt toe of a miserable little scraping of a *dog* hardly even hers? That wretched animalcule has done *me* more mischief than all the men and animals that have ever lived in my time! We must take these paltrinesses to us, also; they are part of our bitter cup.

The Letter she wrote, after that of Scotsbrig *should* have arrived, you will never forget reading with me last Sunday; after writing so, she lunched with the Forsters (old friends), was never seen more brilliantly cheerful, *well* beyond wont, and seemed to *eat* better than usual: "my Friend coming home to me, day after to-morrow!"—and within half or three-quarters of an hour, she sat dead. Oh, that Monday night, oh this week in general, the *black* week of my poor life.—But *she* died happy

* Mrs. Carlyle died on the 21st of April.

and victorious, in the way she had always wished to do.—No more; this is my first writing, and my hand is as you see.

In a few days I will write again. Day by day I am getting bits of order introduced into this great overturn of my past existence; that is the only thing *she* would have wished as a consolation to me. I saw her dead face twice: beautiful as Eternity, soft as an angel's or as a babe's. Put in these four Letters into the Miss Welsh's cover,—and dispatch to them by *Monday's* mail, that you may have *time* for reading them (yourself only).—I will walk all day; my sleep only half come back: well otherwise. God bless you, dear Sister, and reward your sympathy and kindness for me. Ever yours,

T. C.

LETTER 320

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 14 May, 1866.

Dear Sister—It is no want of kindness or grateful affection that prevents my writing to you. But I write to nobody,—literally so. There is but one topic, that lies in all my thoughts day and night, in all forms high and low;—and on that, all mortals but myself are comparatively *little* concerned (however kindly sympathetic they may feel); and it is better, and more tolerable for me, that I keep that locked in my own sad mind. Universal overturn has tumbled all my little world to ruins for me; into this I am drawn and driven to look steadily, and see by degrees what there is that I can do with it.

. . . The Doctor seems well and comfortable: is prompt as possible to do any service to me; but there is not now much in

his power. Maggie Welsh and he keep the House from being so ghastly to me, as in its emptiness it would otherwise be. Maggie is an active orderly polite creature, with a certain truth of sympathy in my sorrow,—and will go at any moment, or stay longer, as I like. Everything is *catalogued*, and arranged (I believe), in the House; but I have not yet had the heart to take it any way in hand. . . .

LETTER 321

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Chelsea, 20th October, 1866.

My dear Brother—It is a long time since I wrote directly to you; and you know what irreparable sorrow and loss has befallen me since then,—which has naturally indisposed me to writing or corresponding, except when altogether indispensable; and has thrown me into silence, and sad and solemn meditations of many kinds, instead. My loss was sudden as if by lightning: but *her* death was very beautiful, and such as she had always wished; her noble life at that point of time (what with those poor Edinburgh celebrations, and her love to me the object of them) would be felt by her, I know well, to be crowned by perfect *victory:* and indeed everybody testifies, what was most of all evident to myself, that her last eighteen months, and especially her last two weeks and her last *day*, were the happiest she had had for many years. Beautiful she was in her utter feebleness and general misery of health; and had such an unconquerable radiancy of cheerfulness, and tranquil clearness, and warmth of affection and generosity to those about her, as are now forever memorable to those that looked on them. To

me her loss has been the loss of all that made life valuable; and I do not seem to gather much insensibility to it: but at all hours of the day, and every turn of my procedures in the world, am painfully reminded that *she*, my bright fellow-pilgrim, has gone from me beyond the stars, and that the rest of my journey must be done wearily *alone*. It is the will of God, it is the everlasting order of Nature; and I must not repine,—nor do I, but strive always to readjust my astonished thoughts, and try more and more to set myself and "my house in order," and to find still something not quite useless which I may *do* for the days that remain, till I follow not unworthily those that have honourably gone.—Enough on this subject, dear Brother of my young years, now far away; more than enough,—for you know already, in your own sympathetic heart, all that I could say upon it.

My business at present is with two small things I had to send you as memorial: the first is a Photograph done the year before her death, and incomparably the best there ever was of her; it will recall many remembrances, and be a softly *pious* kind of company to your thoughts now and then. The other is the bit of *green Paper* here inclosed, which I have been intending for some time and which is now come to hand in the ready state. The small Gift is to me, in no conceivable sense, any loss at all; and to you it may be of some use,—to help some of your children, to do this or that: no doubt there are "holes that need stopping up," and you will find uses for it. Consider it as *her* Gift; she is in fact the cause of it,—the guiding cause at this time. I told you once, I was grown *rich;* that is not *so* true as I then thought it (for my revenues, coming out of Booksales and their fluctuations, soon fell off again); but it is still true *enough:* and of money there is indisputably abundance and

superabundance far beyond what *I* shall ever (to all appearance) have the least chance to need;—so that, if at any time you are in a strait, I charge you strictly to let me know; it will be a real charity to me. Alas, it is, at all times, so little we can do for one another:—and the time is fast striding on, when it will be nothing, forever!—My blessing be with you, dear Brother, and with all that are yours, far over the sea yonder.

I am myself in average bodily health; not *worse* that way, since April last: perhaps even some slight shade better, so quiet and mostly *passive* have I been; but indeed the twelve years deadly wrestle with my last Book had quite broken me of itself, not to speak of the fifty-eight *foregoing* years, and new calamities that have followed! I am living quite alone for the last two months and more; and tho' it is occasionally not a little dreary, and at all times sad and sombre more or less, I find it more supportable than most kinds of company I might have. The Doctor as you know, was with me most of the Summer: so was "Maggie Welsh" (one of the Liverpool cousins, used to the house here): John talked of being back perhaps in November; Maggie too will consent to come if I ask it;—and it is not yet certain how I shall finally arrange. There was left me here an excellent elderly Servant,* of highly respectable, skilful and rational ways; with her, and a small *gleg* [clever] little girl under her, the house goes on quite reasonably well hitherto, and I have no disturbance on that side.

. . . Tell us how you all are, dear Brother; none of us can ever forget you here, least of all I. We have some Photographs, and should not object to more. Jenny and you are framed, in my little dressing-room [and looked at] every morn-

* Mrs. Warren.

ing and noon; *yours* quite the old face, every lineament of it known to me.—Adieu, dear Brother, with my warmest blessing. Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 322

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 28 November, 1866.

My dear Brother— . . . I inclose £4; the three are for my poor old women, any time between this and New Year's Day: Babby Moffat, Lizzy Carruthers, and Jenny Ker (Tom Halliday's widow), these are the three.

It appears I am actually to go to Mentone!* Tyndall was here last night, one of the most determined of mankind; insists on setting off with me, depositing me scathless,—and will then, "after six hours or so," return! I was shocked to hear of such a thing undertaken for my sake; but it was vain to remonstrate,—as well remonstrate with the wind. He is a strange, lean, ardent kind of soul. I have not yet written to Lady Ashburton; but I suppose I must, one of these days.

I finished *Reeves'* † two Books, after a sore haggle and tussle, several nights ago. I have nowhere found such an *Irish* Scholar, of any epoch; seldom or never, in late generations, any man so well read and prepared in what he was writing about: but alas for the arrangement, the method, etc., etc., it beats Banagher! No German is more stupid in regard to all that. To read him is a real task and weariness: it was only his more and more

* On the invitation of Lady Ashburton.

† Rev. W. Reeves, author of "Iona and St. Columba"; "Apologies of Justin Martyr," etc.

evident solidity and insight that led me on.— . . . Yesterday I had a most brisk gallop again, and this time it has done me good. Jean will write. Yours affectionately,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 323

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Mentone, 25th January, 1867.

My dear Brother— . . . Things continue all well, and as it were at their best, with me here. I sleep habitually like a common human creature (a tendency to *sit* too late, but I am seldom after 1 A. M.); I generally get a fair nap withal *before* dinner, which is much suitabler than after; and in short have no reason to complain about sleep. . . . Nowhere in the world was I so quiet. For you must know, my two rooms, bed and sitting, are in a separate house, "pavilion" so-called, one-half of it *mine*, the other a place for firewood and with only a Butler's *bed* and a small guest's-bed; nothing of which do I ever hear of; but live serene in my two airy and jaunty little rooms, high, newish, with big windows, commanding the finest silent prospect, on *both* sides,—and such a thorough draught on being opened, as permits the freest smoking (had my new pipes only arrived, which they haven't!). This is the "Pavillon Madonna," so-called, standing hill-ward and garden-ward, connected with *Villa* Madonna by a smooth-plastered parapeted terrace, *first-floor* high, perhaps about 40 paces in all. . . .

I will say nothing of Mentone Town or Neighbourhood: you will figure us as situated along the fine shingly sea-beach, at the safe and sheltered bottom of an *alcove* (properly two alcoves)

in the beautiful outskirt and finis of the Maritime Alps, with the wild ragged peaks visible as if almost at arm's-length, tho' six miles away, so pure is the air and the light; their bare savage tops, and their ample multiform green *petticoats* (of Olive, Orange, etc.) are certainly the airiest, strangest and most picturesque bit of Earth I ever set eyes on: really quite a kind of pleasure to me, in the bright morning when I first sally out to recover heat! For the peaks are in number manifold; in shape, posture, aspect, perilous, audaciously graceful, and lie in the brightest sunshine, or oftener in sunshine and shadow mixed, which is still finer. Nay, with a sky *grey*, and the white mists climbing about among them, like hoods, like neck-cloths and scarfs,—I like right well to look at them,—to walk among them; as I have done on such a day; so silent are they, so mysterious and mournful, with perhaps some Convent bell jangling out of the unknown distance for a minute or two, awakening thoughts beyond this world!—Up the ravines is generally some roughly paved passable *Ass*-path, sole *highway* to the Hill Villages; there I pretty often go, and would go oftener, were my limbs and feet better: in bad weather, I prefer the carriage road (excellent highway, from Nice to Genoa, blasted out and Macadamed by Napoleon I.), part of which may be made to alternate with "*Promenades*" and streets by the seashore. "Bad weather," I said, but meant merely *rain* (of which after long and ruinous drought, there has been much more than usual at this season). . . . Better "climate," in fine, I think I could not have found anywhere:—in strange contrast to what poor *you* are suffering just now!—I must now finish: I have drawn you a most helpless kind of *map;* which, if you arm yourself with your powerfullest spectacles and patience, and call in

all the neighbours with ditto, may perhaps help you some little in regard to our topographies; of which I have surely *said* enough and more. Of the people, properly *none* of which are much interesting, I may speak by some other chance. At present I must say adieu. Blessings with you all. T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 324

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Mentone, 9th February, 1867.

My dear Brother— . . . Your Letter, which was very kind and affectionate, did me a great deal of good, on its arrival the morning before yesterday (Thursday morning). I observe that when you *fill* your sheet, your Letters are far more agreeable even in the separate parts of them. If there be even no news, as happily there cannot be much from your still locality so long as all (by Heaven's mercy) continues well, yet the very effort to be liberal in quantity necessitates more reflexion, and the tone of your feeling at least comes out, which to a solitary heart is the best result of all. . . .

I continue to like this place as well as ever; and am getting more adjusted into my circumstances, and abler to make the most of what capabilities there are. I try to "work" a little daily, that is, have paper before me,—tho' it is flattering to call it by any name betokening *labour* or *result:* but the process or attempt does something to still me, and I do not neglect it: till two, I am theoretically, and indeed *practically* for most part, invisible here.* . . . Another duty rigorous upon me is that

* The work that Carlyle was doing now was the concluding portion of the "Reminiscences."

of walking about two hours: we have a dashing carriage and pair, with plenty of confused swift driving (when I care to accompany); but however much of that there have been, I always make it set *me* down, four miles or so from home at last. . . . These two duties, that of writing something and that of walking four miles (by myself in preference), I reckon to embrace all the strict requirements of my poor day: the rest comes as it can.—. . . Everybody is kind to me; nothing can exceed the industry, patience, and continual contrivance of my hospitable Lady Ashburton; and she really has a great deal of sense and substantial veracity of mind,—tho' so full of impulses, sudden resolutions, and living so in an element of "float," as poor Wull Brown called it! She made dinner-parties at first, one or two; but finding me incurably abhorrent of them, generously gave it up. We usually dine quite alone, talk not a *burden* to me; and wind up with a bit of reading,—generally it is in *Friedrich* that she prefers to read, as the bad best. . . . She talked the other day of your good old "Lady Clare in the Isle of Wight" being dead; but could not tell me where she had read it or heard it:—is the fact so or not?

The weather here is supremely good: better not only far than any *February* weather, ever imagined by me; but I almost think than any weather I could ever imagine, or at least experience, for any season: sun *strong* as you can stand, or almost stronger; but the air brisk and bracing; pure as ether all the elements round you. I have thrown off my *duvet* quilt; two blankets (one *pair*) abundantly enough, with the air of an open window not far off.

The people are civil, polite, but as *idle* as any set of Italian-English can well be: a people avoidable altogether, or merely

salutable with the hat in passing. The good souls, yet the very poor!—One Lord Brownlow, or rather his Mother, the Lady Marion Alford, a really great kind of Lady, lives a thirty minutes' walking from us: their house is almost the only one Lady A. calls much at, or I call at at all. They are splendid people, very; the poor Lord B. a most interesting creature, age 26, "revenue above £100,000,"—and knows quietly, as his Mother does more visibly, that he is fast dying of hereditary *lungs*.—I have to go and dine there, perhaps once a week, but it does me no ill: a thing of supreme elegance too; fine people in the house; and all of them are clever in their way,—which indeed is not my way!—But surely I should end now: when will you write me so long a Letter, I wonder? Write something soon. "The Box* is to be here on Friday": humph! *Reed*-pipes still hold out. Love to Jean and everybody.—Yours,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 325

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 5 July, 1867.

My dear Brother— . . . We did the last offices to poor [John] Chorley on such terms as there were; nothing could have excused me from *not* going. The real hour (after 4 or 5 enquirings) turned out to be half past eight A. M. at Chester Square: the whole company consisted of four mourners, the two Brothers, the Doctor [Woolmer] and I, all in one carriage, with three servants in another behind us: seven persons in all. . . . They had determined on this entirely tacit mode of funeral,—proudly dis-

* Of long clay pipes. Carlyle's supply of churchwarden pipes had been broken on the way; and another boxful had been ordered.

daining to ask the world for any recognition of Him who was gone;—their unreasonable-looking hour proceeded, I suppose, from the wish to let Woolmer be home to his work as usual. "An upright man and an excellent scholar": that, with name and dates, is all that Henry [Chorley] will put upon the Tomb;—very right, as I told him in reply. We had to stand that "Burial Service"; . . . and the instant our poor well-intending Parson came to an end with his jargon, Henry took us all away. Set me down at this door; is off to the country for a week; sometime after which I am to attend him and choose a Book.* At my real grief for poor Chorley I have not yet *arrived*, but am daily arriving. Very pathetic when I consider him; very sad and strange this rapid and continual disappearance of friend after friend, since April gone a year! What you said to me of his "bursting into tears," is a thing one cannot forget again. I do not believe I have now anybody in London that cares as much about me; tho' several care much more about me than I feel I deserve of them. Enough, enough. . . .

LETTER 326

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 31 August, 1867.

My dear Brother— . . . One disease alone I have, but that one is worth a Nosology: the utter inability to digest any kind of food,—nothing that I swallow, except spring water

* John Chorley left a legacy of £500 to Carlyle; who says in his *Journal:* "I tried to solace myself by shoving it over upon William (a certain Brother of his, 'commercially unlucky'); but there was no admittance there: it must now stand as it does,—and rebuke me as it can."

alone, can be disposed of with impunity! This, which is a fifty years story now, got itself brought to a head by the unspeakable *Friedrich*, etc., labours, and will evidently never much recover. . . .

This morning I have been at a certain *MS.* (translation mostly, which I did at Erskine's fifteen years ago, and called a "*Day with Friedrich the Great*, 23rd July, 1779"),—and which is now to go into vol. 7 of this new Edition,* as an *Appendix* (see vol. 6, p. 643 of old big Edition),—said vol. 7 being a little too *small* in the new. It will not be needed this long while; but I mean to print it in some Magazine first;—and wished to clear my hands altogether of this *Friedrich Stereotype* business *before* starting on the Macmillan revision,† which will be done in a fortnight or less.—Both "*Day with Friedrich*," and *Friedrich* altogether are nearly done with. I *could* not read the whole Book expressly over; had already read up and down extensively in it (finding in general no error anywhere, and never any of the least significance); I had various papers from unknown correspondents stuck in at the right places, with bits of petty errors or obscurities: all these I have introduced or considered;—more I could not do. . . . I believe there is not an error left that will do *ill* to any kind of Public; and so I *end* with it, dropping it finally in the wilderness to live or die as *it* likes. . . .

I rode to Robson's yesterday;—streets very *wae* to me; many of them quite altered too, so that I could hardly find my road.

* The first "Collected Edition," begun in 1856. It was completed in 1869 by the addition of *Friedrich* (in 7 vols.) and comprised in all twenty-three vols.

† Of the article, "Shooting Niagara: and After," which had just appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine*.

Robson is much content with the *Dante;*—won't hear for a moment of your *not* "going on!" I do not urge you at all; will say rather, "Weigh well your strength first! Compute what time it will take," etc., etc. There is but one voice as to the worth and durability of the thing; but—!—

. . . I too had a Letter and Book from Laing: Book is about *early* NOVA SCOTIA, and has various curious pieces (pray tell him so, if you have a chance); Letter is . . . about something I had seen in *Burton,* concerning Bothwell's finis in Denmark:—if you ever see Burton, tell him that that *demands* investigating; and show him, if you have it, the inclosed scrap on the subject. Adieu, and love to every one of you.

Affectionately yours, dear Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 327

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 30 June, 1868.

Dear Jean—I know not whether you, or any of the circle, have got an *old* copy of *Sartor Resartus?* I want one very much, and soon,—not for the sake of the text (or body of the book), but for something *prefixed* (7 or 8 pages by way of Preface, and satirically called "*Testimonies of Authors*" there); the first *English* Edition (London, 1838,—there were two in America before) contains this piece; and now suddenly I am come to want it almost within a week; and there is no catching old editions here! It seems to me you or some of the kindred must have it;—otherwise I shan't know what to do!

If you have it, despatch at once by *post:*—you shall have *it*

back (little the worse) and an excellent new copy besides. If you fairly have it *not*, let me know at once so far; and pray inquire instantly of Mary, of Jamie, etc., all round:—in fact, I flatter myself you will actually contrive to manage; and if so, it will be a real favour. Let us hope, let us hope!—

I at last send you two Photographs of our dear old Mother; one of them, at your choice, you keep, the other give to Mary, to Jamie, etc., if they express no *wish* about it, I don't send any; but will at once if they do.— . . . Watts, too, the Painter, has not quite done with me,* I fear; and seems to be making rather a monster than otherwise. Well, well!— . . .

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 328

To James Aitken, Junior, Liverpool.

Chelsea, 2 October, 1868.

Dear James—On the 10th inst., will you look after Baillie,† and see that he have his allowance. I enclose a £10 crossed cheque.—Some days ago I met the poor fellow on the street, looking wonderfully well,—in clothes all whole and fashionable;

* Carlyle had written on 20th May, "On Friday (3 P.M.) I am to give Watts his 'first sitting.'"

† Captain James Baillie, Mrs. Carlyle's cousin, who had long ere this date squandered his large fortune and fallen into indigent circumstances. Carlyle had for many years prior to this been in the habit of making Baillie a present of £20 annually; but with his usual delicacy, he withheld his name, and employed his nephew, James Aitken, as his intermediary. Baillie died in 1873; and Carlyle continued the gift (of £10 half-yearly) to "Mrs. Baillie," leaving informal instructions that, after his own death, the sum should still be given her while she lived. Carlyle's executors could not carry out his intention; but the half-yearly £10 was supplied at her own expense by the late Mrs. Alexander Carlyle, until it was no longer needed. In this case the payments were made thro' the Revd. Wodehouse Raven of Streatham.

tho' somewhat bare of pile. He came here four or five months ago; but saw only your Mother:—I believe he guesses perfectly well who it is that sends him this money: nevertheless *keep up strictly* the veil!—

Mary* is busy "discovering London," and does very well. She is this instant going out for a long walk with me;—and I have not a moment more. With my best regards to Maggie and you, Yours ever,

T. Carlyle

LETTER 329

Carlyle as Lord Rector of the University of Edinburgh, having been asked to deliver a farewell address to the students at the close of his term of office, sent the following letter to Mr. A. Robertson, Vice-President of the Carlyle Election Committee.

Chelsea, 9 December, 1868.

Dear Sir—I much regret that a Valedictory Speech from me, in present circumstances, is a thing I must not think of. Be pleased to advise the young gentlemen who were so friendly towards me that I have already sent them, in silence, but with emotions deep enough, perhaps too deep, my loving farewell, and that ingratitude or want of regard, is by no means among the causes that keep me absent. With a fine youthful enthusiasm, beautiful to look upon, they bestowed on me that bit of honour, loyally all they had; and it has now, for reasons one and another, become touchingly memorable to me,—touchingly, and even grandly and tragically,—never to be forgotten for the remainder of my life. Bid them, in my name, if they still love

* Miss Mary Carlyle Aitken, Carlyle's niece, who had lately come up to Chelsea to be her uncle's companion and amenuensis.

me, fight the good fight, and quit themselves like men in the warfare to which *they* are as if conscript and consecrated, and which lies ahead. Tell them to consult the Eternal Oracles (not yet inaudible, nor ever to become so, when worthily inquired of); and to disregard, nearly altogether, in comparison, the temporary noises, menacings and deliriums. May they love Wisdom, as Wisdom if she is to yield her treasures, must be loved, —piously, valiantly, humbly, beyond life itself or the prizes of life, with all one's heart and all one's soul:—in that case (I will say again), and not in any other case, it shall be well with them.

Adieu, my young Friends, a long adieu.

Yours with great sincerity,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 330

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 6th March, 1869.

My dear Brother— . . . I struggle to hang by my "Work" (I daresay you guess what*) were it only with three fingers; and generally do get a particle or two of it *done* every well-day: every Sunday there come ten or so *Proof-sheets* † which occupy me (insignificantly) the whole day. . . . Robson prints well and steadily at this new Edition; but I cannot get to care anything about it: dull much of it: much of it sad (in the sense of mournful and loving; *wae, wae*):—all of it a poor thing, to have proved one's conquest in life! Yet one should be thankful for it too; and in truth I partly *am* withal. Forster is getting up the most precise documentary *signed* set-

* "Letters and Memorials of J. W. Carlyle."

† Of the Library Edition of Carlyle's Works.

tlements, etc., with Chapman and Robson, so that no doubt can exist (were *we* all removed in a day) as to what the *bargain* and the whole state of affairs were and are at any time:—the good Forster! A very precise little Cockney Engraver* came ten days ago (and spoiled my day) with his *Proof* of Engraving from Watts's Picture: very ugly and extravagant (absurd *eyes* especially, and *inconsistent* with the rest) it all appeared to me: but Forster likes it well; and I decidedly can say *meinetwegen, meinetwegen!* [for aught I care].

Hoho! Here is Froude;—and there was the one grand thing of all to tell you: interview with Sacred Majesty, Thursday last, at "The Deanery" by appointment a week before. I one of four,—and I may partly think the main one perhaps. Sacred Majesty was very good; thing altogether decidedly insignificant, ditto tiresome; and *worsened* a kind of cold I had (and am still dropping with). Of all which I will not say a word more, unless specially desired by some of you! Tell Jean she might write, tho' I don't. Give my kindest regards to her and household wholly.—Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 331

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 11 March, 1869.

Dear Jean— . . . "Interview" took place this day gone a week; nearly a week before that, the Dean and Deaness (who is called Lady Augusta Stanley, once *Bruce*, an active hard and busy little woman) drove up here, and, in a solemnly

* P. Rajon.

mysterious, though half quizzical manner, invited me for Thursday, 4th, 5 P. M.:—Must come, a very "high or indeed highest person has long been desirous," etc., etc. I saw well enough it was the Queen incognita; and briefly agreed to come. "Half past 4 COME *you!*" and then went their ways.

Walking up at the set time, I was there ushered into a long Drawingroom in their monastic edifice. I found no Stanley there; only at the farther end, a tall old *Gearpole** of a Mrs. Grote,—the most wooden woman I know in London or the world, who thinks herself very clever, etc.,—the sight of whom taught me to expect others; as accordingly, in a few minutes, fell out. Grote and Wife, Sir Charles Lyell and ditto, Browning and myself, these I saw were to be our party. "Better than bargain!" "These will take the edge off the thing, if edge it have!"—which it hadn't, nor threatened to have.

The Stanleys and we were all in a flow of talk, and some flunkies had done setting coffee-pots, tea-cups of sublime patterns, when Her Majesty, punctual to the minute, glided softly in, escorted by her Dame in waiting (a Dowager Duchess of Athol), and by the Princess Louise, decidedly a very pretty young lady, and *clever* too, as I found in speaking to her afterwards.

The Queen came softly forward, a kindly little smile on her face; gently shook hands with all three women, gently acknowledged with a nod the silent deep bow of us male monsters; and directly in her presence everybody was as if at ease again. She is a comely little lady, with a pair of kind clear and intelli-

* Irish-weaver implement. (*Note by T. C.*) An incorrect version of this letter appeared in some newspapers a few years ago. "Wooden woman" was changed to "wooden-headed woman," etc., which is the excuse for reprinting it here.

gent grey eyes; still looks plump and almost young (in spite of one broad wrinkle that shows in each cheek *occasionally*); has a fine soft low voice; soft indeed her whole manner is and melodiously perfect; it is impossible to imagine a *politer* little woman. Nothing the least imperious; all gentle, all *sincere*-looking, unembarrassing, rather attractive even;—*makes* you feel too (if you have sense in you) that she is Queen.

After a little word to each of us in succession as we stood,—to me it was, "Sorry you did not see my Daughter," Princess of Prussia (or "she sorry," perhaps?), which led us into Potsdam, Berlin, etc., for an instant or two; to Sir Charles Lyell I heard her say, "Gold in Sutherland," but quickly and delicately cut him *short* in responding; to Browning, "Are you writing anything?" (he has just been publishing the absurdest of things!); to Grote I did not hear what she said: but it was touch-and-go with everybody; Majesty visibly *without* interest or nearly so of her *own*. This done, Coffee (very black and muddy) was handed round; Queen and Three women taking seats (Queen in the corner of a sofa, Lady Deaness in opposite corner, Mrs. Grote in a chair *intrusively close* to Majesty, Lady Lyell modestly at the *diagonal* corner); we others obliged to stand, and hover within call. Coffee fairly done, Lady Augusta called me gently to "come and speak with Her Majesty." I obeyed, first asking, as an old infirmish man, Majesty's permission to *sit*, which was graciously conceded. Nothing of the least significance was said, nor *needed;* however my bit of dialogue went very well. "What part of Scotland I came from?" "Dumfriesshire (where Majesty might as well go some time); Carlisle, *i.e.*, "*Caer-Lewel*, a place about the antiquity of King Solomon (according to Milton, whereat Majesty smiled); Border-Ballads

(and even old Jamie Pool slightly alluded to,—not by name!); Glasgow, and even Grandfather's ride thither,—ending in mere *psalms* and streets *vacant* at half-past nine P. M.;—hard sound and genuine Presbyterian *root* of what has now shot up to be such a monstrously ugly Cabbage-tree and Hemlock-tree!" All which Her Majesty seemed to take rather well.

Whereupon Mrs. Grote rose, and good-naturedly brought forward her Husband to her own chair, *cheek by jowl* with Her Majesty, who evidently did not care a straw for him; but kindly asked, "Writing anything?" and one heard "Aristotle, now that I have done with Plato," etc., etc.—but only for a minimum of time. Majesty herself (I think àpropos of some question of my *shaking hand*) said something about her own difficulty in writing by dictation, which brought forward Lady Lyell and Husband, mutually used to the operation. After which, talk becoming trivial, Majesty gracefully retired,—Lady Augusta with her,—and in ten minutes more, returned to receive our farewell bows; which, too, she did very prettily; and sailed out as if moving on skates, and bending her head towards us with a smile. By the Underground Railway I was home before seven, and out of the adventure, with only a headache of little moment.

Froude tells me there are foolish *myths* about the poor business; especially about my share of it; but this is the real truth;—*worth* to me, in strict speech all but nothing; the *myths* even less than nothing. . . .

T. CARLYLE.*

* The above letter was written at Mrs. Aitken's special request. Carlyle notes in his *Journal* (15 March, 1869):—"It was Thursday, 4th March, 5-6.30 P. M., when this pretty 'Interview' took place. Queen was really very gracious and pretty in her demeanour throughout: *rose* gently in my esteem, by everything that happened, did not fall in any

LETTER 332

To Dr. Carlyle, Edinburgh.

Chelsea, 28th April, 1869.

My dear Brother—Your Letter of Monday was expected; all the welcomer when it duly came,—tho' there was one sad bit of news. Poor Syme;* what a fateful contrast since we were there! He told me his poor Wife had bidden him, in her last hours, Not to grieve for her, but save himself by standing steadfastly to whatever of work he had to do; and, *this*, he said, was what he had resolved to try and effect. As he has been doing, and on that last day was conspicuously doing (it seems), —when in one moment he is struck down, as by a bolt from the blue! I cannot get him out of my mind. . . . If you see him, say on my poor part everything that is kind and ever-grateful; my deepest sympathies are with him, if alas, they were good for anything.

Dickens, I find by Forster who was just here, has narrowly

point. Sister Jean has got a brief sketch of the thing,—on her earnest request. The 'Interview' was quietly very mournful to me; the one point of real interest a sombre thought, 'Alas, how it would have cheered *Her* bright soul (for my sake), had she been here!' To me, with such prospects close ahead, it could not be much, and did indeed approximate to melancholy well-meant *zero*."

* The eminent surgeon, James Syme, who at this time was struck down by apoplexy and died in the following year. In July, 1868, Carlyle had been his guest and patient for a week or ten days. He writes in his *Journal* (27th July): "Have been here" [Mr. Syme's private residence in the suburbs of Edinburgh, looking out upon Blackford Hill and the Braids] "in the beneficent, skilful and excellent Mr. Syme's, under *Surgical* treatment (thanks to his signal kindness); and seem to be in the way of much *improvement* (if I still prosper),—at any rate, am now *out* of the curative process, and am much thankful, with good reason."

escaped *death* (if he yet have escaped) by rushing about "on his *readings*,"—in chase of still other thousands of pounds, which he needed so little! That would have been the sorriest of all those tragic endings,—tragical *mockery* thrown in as an ingredient!—Poor Lord Stanley is now past hope.

Mary has been off in Liverpool; glided off, on the sudden, on Thursday to meet her Mother. . . . Since Mary went I have had my very worst bit of sleeplessness: out of five nights, only two with real sleep,—of which happily last night was one. Otherwise I could not have written to-day, either. This new question of sleep is sometimes like driving me desperate; but can't either, nor shall! . . . Say to Dr. Brown* something kind from me; my affectionate respects and love to Erskine. . . . Adieu, dear Brother; it is striking four.—Yours ever,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 333

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 15 July, 1869.

My dear Brother—I was much obliged by your copious description of Craigenputtock and its affairs: poor old Moorland *Home*, the obstructed but kindly Days I had there shine out on me from afar with a strange pathetic brightness in the vanished Long-ago; and it is perennially interesting to me, tho' probably enough I shall never see it again. Beautiful, but *wae*, very *wae!*

Mary and I are very busy here; doing all we can to finish our sad Task (while time yet is); and indeed are far on; and hope we shall be through it, in a rough form, before many weeks.

* Dr. John Brown, author of "Rab and his Friends," etc., etc.

It has been, and is, naturally one of the mournfullest I ever had. Perhaps *it* has had something to do with the miserable want of sleep, etc., that has persecuted me for almost ten months now, fit after fit? I am glad to report myself improved in that respect. For near two weeks now I have had no utterly *bad* night, but always got some reasonable pittance of sleep,—tho' every night still I go to bed with the dismal uncertainty whether there will be any. . . .

The day before yesterday we spent at Addiscombe, and returned in the evening: this is the *first* and "trial visit,"—all the others went to smoke. . . .—Addiscombe was altogether lovely; we were driven out (2.30 P. M. instead of "noon"), and driven back to this door (10 P.M.);—a complete "rest-day," which did us both visible good. The fixed settlement then was that Lady A. was to quit London, Saturday (to-morrow) afternoon, and with her Child,* who *is* there, continue there,—taking *us* and luggage out with her. And something *like* this, I for my own share, determine it shall be. London and its empty broiling tumult are becoming quite intolerable to me. Mary too, poor little soul, will oftener have nothing of *meat* kind to dinner,—tho' she ate well enough at Addiscombe, and *yesterday* here: . . .

I take little heed of my Edition, *care* little about it, merely *read the Proofs*, so long as I last. The *Friedrich* Pictures † too are all under way, of which you (and Jean) shall soon see evidence.—. . .

I had that Letter from Erskine a week ago;—must really "dictate" something to him to-morrow. Froude's Note is his first from Ireland,—*hat Nichts zu sagen* [it signifies nothing];

* Hon. Mary Baring, late Marchioness of Northampton.

† Illustrations for the Library Edition of *Friedrich*.

burn *both* the notes, if you read them or not. Adieu, dear Brother; it is dreadfully hot even out here beside the Water Butt,—and I must bid you all adieux!

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 334

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 6th January, 1870.

My dear Brother— . . . Norton's* Letter (which I had expected straight from *Boston*) was very welcome to me; and points out, as you will see, a quite brief way of finishing the Business;† way which I design to *follow*. From Emerson nothing has come: but I forthwith got *Norton* copied and despatched it to him (Tuesday last), with intimation that I now clearly saw my way to *doing* the thing "in few minutes" (my part of it); but would wait till he, Emerson, spoke. For the rest, that I had two *Catalogues* ready, one for him instantly, if etc.—and seemed *impatient* rather to have *done*.—You can read *Norton* carefully; you, dear Brother, will, as is like, have to *act* upon it by and by! *Norton* and his Photograph (also Alick's Photograph),—these are all I want *returned*.

Alick's Letter affected me not a little, in my present sickly and downcast humour. Poor fellow, he too is looking into the silent Eternity, with all the sadness and solemnity, and not quite

* The well-known Professor Charles Eliot Norton, to whom all readers and friends of Carlyle have so much cause to be grateful.

† The bequest to Harvard University of the books which Carlyle had used in writing *Cromwell* and *Friedrich*.

with all the composure, which some others of us are used to! Poor Alick, he was always very affectionate, tender of heart: his Letter has nothing of bad news, and is yet very sad. I mean to write (even in pencil) to him one other Letter very soon.—This is nearly all of business, dear Brother;—and my time is up or rather more!

About Bismarck, there never came any Part II. of the *Buch des Grafen*, etc.; but Mary is gone to Williams and Norgate, (*inter alia*) to enquire if they have it, and what price. Meanwhile somebody has *translated* it here (a biggish volume with all the Prints) and I have it gratis here, and ready for you by Menzies, middle of this month, if you don't *prefer* the German at once by Post?

Adieu dear Brother. Mary and I are due at Froude's, to dine there with Ruskin, to-morrow evening: no help for it; "over-shoes, over-coat," perhaps it will matter little!

Heart's love to you all.

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 335

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Chelsea, 12th January, 1870.

My dear Brother—Three or four days ago I was agreeably surprised by a very kind and interesting Letter from you; welcome, as you may fancy, beyond almost any other that could have come! After twice reading, I despatched it next day to Dumfries, where also it naturally gave much pleasure. You and I don't write so often directly to each other as we were wont;

but both of us know that it is not from decay of affection,—ah no, but from far other causes! and that in our silence, we think of each other, almost every day of our lives, with a sad and solemn tenderness, with wishes, hopes and memories, that only deepen as the end draws nigh! Your Photograph is in my dressing-closet, your true old face well-known to me; among the Shadows of my other loved ones who are far away—far, far, into Eternity itself, all but one or two:—it is there, every morning that I see myself surrounded as with a crowd of *sacred* Witnesses; and am silently admonished to send my sad thoughts Heavenward, and to silently *worship* if there be anything of piety and goodness left in me. Alas, the sadness and the longing wishes do not fail, nor can ever; but the "piety," the faith and goodness are not so constant. One's poor heart can only say, in its heavy-laden state, "Great unknown God, King and Maker of this Universe, be merciful to us all."—But I will quit this; all this is already as good as known to you: and my *writing* talent (nearly gone as you see) must confine itself to narrower practical limits.

It is a great comfort to me to know that you are in fair old-man's health; and furthermore, that your Boys and Girls seem all to be good promising creatures and all doing well. These young ones springing up are now a great wealth to you, dear Brother; I now feel what a stern *poverty* the want of all such in my own case is! Since April gone three years, I feel at all hours entirely left *solitary;* no joy, or cheerful promise of a social heart's communion in this world now possible. Nevertheless, be complaint far from us. A noble sorrow there, is, or can be, a blessedness too. I am far sadder and gloomier of mind than I used to be; but ought not to say that I am to be called unhappy,

—on the contrary rather. This wretched blockhead and beggar of a world can now do nothing for me, nothing against me; . . . All is going (as you too feel) into unspeakable downbreak; and must either *re*-make itself on a truer basis, or die forever:—in either case with long misery and agony, sad to contemplate: but it is a blessed *alternative*, too, and we can calmly, with Hope still tremulously alive, leave it to the All-Mighty and All-Wise!—Enough of that too. What I had practically to say had reference to your children, Tom and the rest of them; whose starting in the world is of real interest to me, and a thing I ought to help in if I could.

Understand then, dear Brother, that, tho' not to be called in the modern English dialect *rich*, I have plenty of money, far far beyond any wants I shall now ever have;—and that, if at any time, your own Household, or the outfit of any of your young Folk, get to need a lift over any hard *hill*, I bid you and again bid you, at once apply to me; and tell you, what is true, that it will be a *comfort* to me to be of help. Believe that always; *do*, without my speaking farther of it.—

. . . I am myself in a little better health perhaps, at least I visibly *sleep* somewhat better, for the last three months or so; which is a great blessing and relief from paltry fears and ditto miseries; tho' my *strength* of any kind seems hitherto as if it were rather *weakened* by the change. In particular, I never in my life was so *idle;* have no heart at all for *work;* languid, silent, *weary*, *wae*. Little Mary writes for me; but I cannot yet learn to write by dictating to her; willing, swift and eager as she is, poor little soul. She is a wise little thing, *honest* I think as spring-water; pretty to look upon; and shines here like a small *taper*, slightly breaking the gloom of this my new

element. I think I will send to Dumfries and get you a Photograph of her if I can, for next Letter! . . .

God's blessing be on you and yours, dear Alick.

Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 336

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Melchet Court, Romsey, 9 Feb., 1870.

My dear Brother—You know that we are here since Saturday evening last; my first bit of writing is to you, that you may hear a little of what is happening to us here. Our journey down, escorted by the Lady [Ashburton] in person, was perfect; no stoppage till Basingstoke (51 miles); the whole distance, which is as far as from you to Edinburgh, done in three hours,—through a country pleasant to the eye, and, so soon as one was out of London and its anarchies, to the mind as well. The happiness of breathing clean air, and tasting divine silence, or rather drinking it in draughts, "like a chapped flute thrown into pure water,"—has not yet ceased to be gratefully sensible. For the rest, I need not add, our *welcome* continues to be unsurpassable, or indeed unequallable: Lady and Child are alone with us here; the *jewels* of the house, *we two*, and you know it already for one of the best-appointed, beautifullest and solidly resourceful houses in England. Surely I ought to be very well; but alas, I am *not*, for what reason you guess! *Sleep* hitherto is well-nigh unattainable. . . . Yesternight especially was one of long misery,—tho' I had ridden fourteen miles on an excellent trotting nag, high and swift, my *best* ride for many years back.—

Strange enough I really feel *better* to-day than usually in Chelsea after sleep in abundance. . . . It is my fixed resolution not to be *impatient*, but to try every scheme I can invent to get into sleep, and so utilize this friendly Harbour of Melchet, which might be now one of my chief resources in the Earth, were sleep but added. Till Saturday at soonest I don't mean to give in. And this is all, on the dietetic side, that I had to tell you.

This morning Emerson's Letter at last arrived; satisfactory altogether,—as I think you will judge, if you remember Norton's. To-day is American mail; and I ought to have written both to him and Norton, but *can't:* this is all I will write, or have done since Friday last. Miss Bromley's Letter also came this morning. Send me both back, but no hurry; Emerson's at least is excellent.—We are longing to hear that Jean has got safe back, and in general how and what you are all doing.

Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 337

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 19 March, 1870.

Dear Brother— . . . It is very sad and dreary all this that you have to record of poor Erskine's gliding away from among us, as he seems now to be doing. The way of all the Earth,—and especially of *us* Earth's Children! Good, pious loving soul! One could not wish him to linger on those terms; but the *end* itself of such a pilgrimage and such a fellow-pilgrim, is sad and solemn to one's heart. As you hear any tidings, do not fail to impart hitherward.

This Letter enclosed has come from Norton; pray return it when read. I have not yet got Emerson's answer to my last missive along with *Catalogue sent him;* but I have already marked down (in pencil, *pen* being so unhandy) the Bequest itself, and shall *reposit* it beside the already written (two bits of sheets, I think, *sealed up* long since), so soon as I have added a *name* or so from Emerson's expected Letter, and adjoined any direction that may be needed. I hope you will find everything clear as can be; and it is to you dear Brother (if you survive me as is natural and desirable) that I trust for fulfilling everything as if I was myself still there. That is truly my thankful feeling at this and all moments. Accept my thanks while I *can* still give them!—To set my house in order, is surely very becoming, now when I have as it were fairly ceased all *working* of the old sort. Without and within all seems to say to me: Be content to cease; thy work is done, and thou art done; cease! . . .

Ever your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 338

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 2 April, 1870.

Dear Brother—I hope you are getting as good a day for your journey as we have here,—our first really bright day for almost a fortnight past; and this too was dirty yellow fog till about 11 o'clock.

I had a *second* night of insomnia, and a weary walk yesterday seeking out Alfred Tennyson's London Lodgings,—upon whom I felt bound to "leave a card"; he having called here last Sunday

on very good-natured terms, and borne me ditto company on my walk. Good-natured, almost kind; but rather dull to me! He looks healthy yet, and hopeful; a stout man of 60,—with only one deep wrinkle, *crow* wrinkle just under the cheek bones.—I was lucky enough (for my then mood, lucky) to find nobody; nothing required but a *card.*

Emerson's clever little Book * I finished, night before last; and now send,—having judiciously eschewed lending it elsewhither. You will find it a high, radiant,searching kind of thing; but in general much too ideal and unpractical and impracticable,—totally *neglecting* the frightful amount of Friction and perverse Impediment, perverse but insuperable, which attends every one of us in this world!——I fancy my Letter and message to him must have gone the way you guessed.† If so, a Note I sent since will explain the delay to him. . . .

My love to Jean and everybody.

Your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 339

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 14 May, 1870.

My dear Brother— . . . I have also had many people calling on me, few of whom give me much pleasure. Masson was here twice, a welcome face tho' a very silent one. He went for Edinburgh Friday last (yesterday in fact). Bain also I saw

* "Society and Solitude" (London, 1870). On the fly-leaf of Carlyle's copy is inscribed in Emerson's hand: "To the General in Chief from his Lieutenant, March, 1870."

† Dr. Carlyle rightly guessed that it had been delayed by an accident to a mail-steamer.

twice; well enough, if you keep him off his "cerebration" balderdash, which I did. Blackie I have not seen nor wished "to"; but he sent me a ticket to his four Lectures, and I ought to make an effort, on Tuesday next, towards his *last;*—perhaps I shall break down nevertheless.—I am, as before, the "victim of indigestion," which naturally makes matters worse, *worse.* Froude has been at Vienna for a three-weeks, looking into Charles V. despatches about Ann Boleyn; and has come home illuminated on that matter. I have only seen him once, and had a large dose of that,—had it been of use to me! He has got little Allingham to be "Sub-Editor";* I suppose he will be off to Ireland again soon; I always feel the want of him when he is away. There *he* comes; I hear his knock! Allingham too follows: ah me, nothing more to be *done* then! . . .

LETTER 340

To Miss Margaret Duncan.

Chelsea, 20 September, 1870.

Dear Madam—Having been in Scotland for a good while, it was not till yesterday that I got sight of your Letter. I feel much grieved at your anxieties about your Brother;† but am rather confident, withal, that your affection considerably exaggerates the matter. He seemed to me a very honest-minded, clear and pious-hearted man; and if it *be* his genuine *Love of Truth* (as I take it to be) that has led him into these embarrassments and miserable anxieties, you are to be patient,

* Of *Fraser's Magazine.*

† Mr. George Duncan, now of Berlin.

and also hopeful, in a very high degree, in reference to that high quality,—the highest that can dwell in man!

For the rest, if he have any value for my advice, I authorize you to inform him, with all emphasis, that nobody can less approve than I do his throwing off of practical employment, and exchanging his firm land there for a sea of dubitations, to which I know too well there is neither Shore nor Bottom. Tell him, my first commandment to all men is, To find their work and do it; that except in *Work*, I have long since discovered, and do steadily believe, there is no deliverance possible from Doubt. Indeed, if he has been reading *me*, this I think is the main precept he will find, That the chief end of man is to work in a faithful manner; that Thinking which does not lean upon Work is an effort thrown away; and if he plead uncertainty about his Work, and cannot find what his real duty in regard to Work is, this is an excellent precept:

"Do the duty that lies nearest thee; DO *it;* thy second duty (thy second bit of Work) will already have become clearer to thee."

This is all I have to say at present,—except to recommend, which probably is not necessary, a kind and hopeful attitude towards your dear Brother, of whom I yet have not the least despair.

Believe me, dear Madam, Yours, with many good wishes,

T. CARLYLE.

P. S.—I received, in Dumfries, a pleasant and very kind Letter from your worthy Uncle, the Rev. Mr. Dodds of Dunbar, to which I fear there went, contrary to my intention, no answer. My right hand shakes and I have great difficulty and great un-

willingness to write. Have the goodness to make my apologies to Mr. Dodds; to say that I remember him worthily as an old correspondent,* and regret to have yielded to my many impediments in that matter. My kind regards also to his Wife, whom I well remember as pretty little Barbara-Ann of long ago.

LETTER 341

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Chelsea, 6 October, 1870.

My dear Brother—Since your Letter in June, which punctually gave fortunate account of that Bank Paper for your Jane's and Tom's behoof, which I was glad to see and much thanked you for, there have come addressed to the Dr., but for benefit of us all, two Letters from you,—the last only four or five days ago, forwarded hither from Dumfries. I have also had a Letter from Tom, which you can tell him I have read with pleasure. We are all right glad and thankful to hear of your continued welfare, and that nothing of notable misfortune hitherto occurs to disturb the current of your days. Old age indeed is of itself sad, and ought naturally to be as it is with you, serious and even solemn, not joyful any more; but we have all of us great reason to acknowledge with gratitude to Providence that extraordinary misfortune has visited us so rarely, and that so many of us Brothers and Sisters, have all lived peaceably to be old men and old women. All grown or growing old, and *two* of us (I myself well a-head) already past the Psalmist's limit of three score and ten. Many a time I

* Carlyle's letters to the Doddses are printed in a little book called *Lays of the Scottish Covenanters.*

remember the old pious Annandale phrase which every sinful man may well apply to himself, "A monument of Mercy!"

In the end of June, as doubtless you have already heard from John, we came to Dumfries (Niece Mary and I); staid there till the middle of September. A silent, quiescent, very empty, dreary kind of life to me, cheered only by the great affection, patience and kindness of everyone about me. The air was pure and excellent; the solitude not unbeneficial; but the Railway whistles which are near that excellent House of Jean's were a sore misery to me (tho' to no one else of the smallest inconvenience); and I lost often in a very wretched way, on the whole, about a third part of my natural sleep; which of course was much in the way of the salutary influences there. So that I know not at this time if my health got any improvement or not; tho' of course the change itself was something,—the turning of a poor sick creature from one side to another. I feel, at least, no worse; am gradually recovering my sleep here, and hope sometimes to do a little better this winter than last. My worst inconvenience in these years is the refusal of my right hand to write for me. The left hand is yet quite steady; but the right shakes so as to render writing, if not impossible, at least intolerably slow and unsatisfactory: literally enough, the breaking of my work arm, and cutting me off from any real employment I may still be fit for. In these weeks, however, I am trying to write by dictation (as you see here), and Mary, who is both swift and willing, eagerly helps and encourages; so that perhaps something may come of it. Let us hope!

The noises during my first month at Dumfries, drove me to Craigenputtock for shelter for one week (properly for five days), —how inexpressibly sad I need not describe to you. Silent,

empty, sorrowful and mournful as death and the grave. Not in my life have I passed five more heavy-laden days. Your old stone dyke, the fence to the cow-field which you built for us the year we were in London, that was still standing, firm every stone of it, a memorial of affection still alive for me; *all* else was of affection now in the death-realms, gone, gone, and only a sorrow and a love for it left in me which exceeds all others. The place is all, I believe, in substantially superior order; immensities of grass upon it this season, effectually drained and a great deal of money laid into it. . . .

I made two pilgrimages, one to Ecclefechan (was some hours at Scotsbrig), another to Haddington; on what errand each of them you may conjecture. The Ecclefechan one did my heart a solemn kind of *good;* the other Pilgrimage was wrong planned; it involved three sleepless nights in Edinburgh, and the blessing in it was encircled by a great deal of mean wretchedness. This and the day's Railwaying hither, which soon followed, was all the journeying I did.

. . . Pray tell me about poor old John, our half-brother. I often think enquiringly about him, and what is becoming of him in his lonely old age. Some rumour was going among us that he was to come over to Bield to spend some of the dark months with you. Was that true or not? Give my affectionate regards to him, and to every one of you down to the youngest; especially to Tom and Jane, whom I personally know. God's blessing be on you and yours, dear Brother.

Ever your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 342

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 26 November, 1870.

My dear Brother—. . . We have had quite a daily jumble of Letters all week on that German-French affair,*—making truly a much a-do about nothing; for none of these missives throws any new light whatever on the matter; . . .

Turgenief † was here yesterday, and walked with me in Hyde Park,—unaltered, or altered for the better, plumper, taller, more stalwart than ever; only his beard a little greyer. He was excellent company while we walked together; talking about English Literature (his disappointment with our *recentiores*, our Brownings, Tennysons, Thackerays, Dickenses,—nay our Byrons and Shelleys), and giving experiences about the starting of the war in Baden. The sight of him is interesting to me; tho' it awakens the saddest memories. He talks of being here for five or six weeks;—intent chiefly on making some acquaintance with real English Literature. Froude is to have an article on "Progress" in next *Fraser;* which you will find worth reading, tho' it is rather straggly and incondite, not at the bottom of the matter at all. . . .

My last bit of news was very sad: the death of good Thomas Spedding,—a great shock and surprise to me last time I met Froude. James Spedding's stoically mournful little Note on

* Carlyle's letter to the *Times* on the Franco-German War.

† Ivan S. Turgenief (or Tourguéneff), the popular and liberal-minded Russian novelist (born 1818; died 1883). His home was in Baden-Baden from 1863–71.

the subject (which please return when you have read it) was lying for me when I had parted with Froude and come in from my walk. Another true and valued friend of mine, whom you I think hardly knew, I have also lost: poor Foxton, near Rhyader in Wales; sudden and sad, which has equally affected me. Out of my own kindred, I had not two friends in the world who were so valuable to me. Alas, alas!

Here is enough, dear Brother. Thank Jean for what she wrote to me, which I read with real pleasure. She writes always with sincerity, with a certain veracity which was peculiar to "Craw Jean" when she was hardly eighteen inches high, and which is always worthy of much esteem. . . .

Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 343

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 10 December, 1870.

Dear Brother—. . . Last night I was even out to a great or greatish Dinner: strictly speaking the first time for these four or six years! But the Duke of Argyle called one morning lately, with a Print for me; was by Mrs. Warren mistaken for a School-Board canvasser, and alarmingly dealt with (over which there were peals of laughter, when I got the real name and arrived up-stairs).* Invitation from the Lady Duchess

* It was the day of the London School-Board Election; and Mrs. Warren (the housekeeper, rather a Cerberus at the door in the best of times) had been repeatedly disturbed that morning by canvassers soliciting Carlyle's vote. When she opened the front-door to the Duke of Argyle's knock, presuming that here was another canvasser, she stamped her foot angrily and exclaimed: "Mr. Carlyle is *not* going to vote to-day!" The Duke, much amused, handed her his card, saying quietly, "Take that to Mr. Carlyle."

was the consequence; and I shudderingly felt I had to go! But it passed all harmlessly, indeed beautifully; they sent their carriage for me, and I went and came as in a big ball of wool. There was an elegant little party (Howards, a Lord Lowndes, their own Lorne and pretty Daughters); flunkies were grave and solemn, creatures in kilt and sporran. The Duke himself is a most kindly, frank and intelligent man. I dined on a fraction of venison and ditto of grouse, came home without damage and was astonished to find I had been so cheerful, . . . Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 344

To Dr. Carlyle, Edinburgh.

Chelsea, 21 January, 1871.

Dear Brother—. . . I am reading and slightly revising (with hardly any change at all) the three volumes of German Translations; and am more than half through the second vol., —that is to say *nearly* half through Meister's *Travels;* which with the *Apprenticeship* is full of strange impressiveness to me after so many years. . . . I am not to be plagued, it appears, with reading proofs of that People's Edition at two shillings a volume; and it will bring in, covenants Chapman,—a good sum of money,—I altogether forget how much. Mary in the meanwhile is strenuously busy about signatures for a Pension for poor Geraldine [Jewsbury], which, in the sickness of Forster and the laziness of Froude, Mary has had to undertake and is managing with great vigour and success.

. . . I send my best regards to Mrs. Stirling,* my warm-

* Widowed sister of Thomas Erskine.

From the painting by Maxwell, 1842

MARGARET AITKEN CARLYLE, ÆT. 71

est hopes that she is getting well again: ah me, ah me!—For the last three nights I am reading a Book of Moltke's, The Russian-Turk War of 1827, which is written with great talent, veracity and vigour; and betokens to me a truly superior kind of man. That is the one attraction to me, and holds me fast hitherto, in the total absence even of maps which my copy (lent by Reichenbach)* altogether has *not.*

Our weather here is one whirlpool of mud, rain and darkness; the very air seems to be a kind of solution of *glar!* But for the last three days it sometimes seems to me mending. Courage, courage.

Adieu, dear Brother.

Ever yours affectionately,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 345

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Chelsea, 28 February, 1871.

My dear Brother—. . . Outward things go what might be called altogether prosperously with me: much printing and new printing of my poor bits of Books, which never had such a degree of circulation as now; honour enough, all sorts of honour from my poor fellow-creatures, etc., etc., all which sure enough is good in its kind, is at least better than the contrary would have been; but has all become of small moment, and indeed to a degree that astonishes myself utterly *indifferent* in sight of the Immensities and Eternities which I now see close ahead. Plenty of personal friends there are too, who are

* Count Reichenbach, a German political refugee, whose wife was a sister of the Mr. Plattnauer often mentioned in Mrs. Carlyle's letters.

abundantly kind, and several of them clever and ingenious to talk with; I do not shun these altogether, but neither do I seek them; conversation generally wearies rather than delights me, and I find the company of my own thoughts and recollections, what may be called conversing with the Dead, a more salutary, tho' far mournfuller employment. In fact, dear Brother, I am now in my 76th year, and for the last five years especially am left altogether solitary in these waste whirlwinds of existence; that is, as you perceive, the summary of my history at present. I think I was always a serious creature too, and always had in the heart of me a feeling that was unspeakable for those I loved. No wonder one's thoughts in such case are solemn, and one's heart indisposed for worldly trivialities, however big these think themselves.—

. . . In late times, looking at you all in Canada, where you are as it were a little Colony of yourselves, I cannot help feeling thankful that you are there and not here. This country seems to grow more and more uninhabitable for the natural-minded man of any rank, and especially for the poor man who has to work for his bread, and determines to be honest withal. More and more does that become impractical to him as matters now go; the proportion of false work and of false ware,—*shoddy* in all departments, practical and spiritual,—increases steadily from year to year. Wealth in enormous masses becomes ever more frequent, and in a still higher proportion, poverty, grim famine and the impossibility to live, among larger and larger masses of the Working People, in the lower kinds of them. Among the higher kinds of them, intemperance, mutiny, bad behaviour increases daily. In fact I apprehend before many years the huge abominable Boil will *burst*, and the British

Empire fall into convulsions, perhaps into horrors and confusions which nobody is yet counting on. All Europe, indeed the whole civilized world, is in weltering and confused struggle and mutiny; I can find nobody so safe as he that is piously and faithfully tilling the earth and leading a manful life in silence, far away from all that, divided by the sea from all that.

. . . We have had as you doubtless know, an agitated six months with the German-French War. Not since we were Boys, and the *First* Napoleon was getting handcuffed and flung out of doors, have I seen so much emotion or so universal about any Continental thing. Yesterday, and not till then, we learn that the *Preliminaries* of Peace are actually signed,—not yet Peace itself; tho' that latter too is to be looked for as certain in a few days; and so an end to the most furious controversy Europe has ever seen, at least to the completest brashing into ruinous defeat that vain and quarrelsome France has ever had. . . . No event has taken place in Europe, in my time that pleased me better, and, for my own part I expect that the results, which are certain to be manifold and are much dreaded by the ignorant English, will be salutary and of benefit to all the world.—

Adieu, my dear Brother, . . . Be diligent and faithful, patient and hopeful one and all of you; and may we all know, at all times that verily the Eternal rules above us, and that nothing finally *wrong* has happened or can happen. . . .

Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 346

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 25 March, 1871.

My dear Brother—. . . Mary is very good and kind, poor little soul, has been up three times in the hollow of the night ministering to me like a beneficent little Fairy; yesterday she had from Lady Ashburton a shining testimony of that Lady's about her, which I doubt not is rather agreeable to the little wretch;—but I leave her to report the thing to her own Mother (as of course she will do in a day or two) having no authority of my own to speak of such matters. She has already done out of her own little head four Letters for me to correspondents requiring nothing but second hand; and had just got done five minutes before I was set down at this door.

. . . Mr. Erskine (*ci-devant* Patterson) with his Wife were duly welcomed here; with a glad surprise even, for I did not know he had changed his name: they sat half an hour in very pleasant colloquy with me; and I engaged to consider if there would be any possibility of my putting down on paper some reminiscences of good old Erskine; which so far as yet appears I hardly think there will. . . .

Your affectionate Brother,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 347

To the Same.

Melchet Court, Romsey, 13 May, 1871.

. . . I read almost nothing either, and in fact do nothing; but am content to look upon *being in the open air*, sitting,

walking, being driven through the New Forest sceneries and (one day) riding a too fiery horse in hope of benefit from that variety of inaction, which, however, I have not repeated hitherto. Turgenief came duly on Monday; but unhappily had to go again on Wednesday morning; I say unhappily, not only because he is really a friendly, intelligent man, a general favourite with high and low, but because he entirely relieved me from any labour of talking,—being himself a most copious and entertaining talker,—by far the best I have ever heard who talks so much. We had various other people here, but none that did me the least good; nothing in fact is so tolerable to me at present as being well let alone. The clear air, the sometimes shining skies, the great *sough* of the woods, the otherwise entire silence; all that comes to me with an unspeakable welcome; and, though steeped in sadness, all of it is a real blessing to me. . . . I can add no more except that our treatment here is supreme; and that Mary is a first favourite with everybody. Tell Jean that, with my love. God bless you all. . . .

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 348

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 13th October, 1871.

My dear Sister—I intended writing to you yesterday, but was prevented; indeed I have various days intended, but always some pitiful invincible trifle has prevented me. One poor word, however, you have to-day; though, alas, what good can it do! All words are in effect idle; the stroke has fallen,* our loss is

* The death, by omnibus accident in London, of Mr. James Aitken, Mrs. Aitken's eldest son.

irrevocable and unalterable. "It is God's holy will," is all that any of us can say or think upon it;—and to think it so with our whole heart is far better than any speaking of it; and the sole assuagement that exists for any of us. I am much struck by the universal sympathy poor Jim's death awakens and the great love of all his friends for him. A faithful, useful, clear and loving-hearted man; and felt to be such, apparently without exception, by all who knew him. There is a mournful but deep and true comfort in knowing that this was verily the fact; a human being at any stage of his existence cannot end on better terms. You cannot but weep for him, dear Sister; but surely this is not the worst kind of sorrow, by degrees I trust you will find it has been blessed to you.

Mary is very diligent and active doing all she can to unravel the unpleasant mystery about his worldly effects; which we hope will one day come to clearness; it is for the present an unwelcome mean ingredient in your sorrow; but perhaps *it* is no evil either,—gives you all something to *do* outwardly while in the endless inward sorrow there is nothing to be done at all, God be with you, dear Sister; and sanctify to you (as our Fathers used to say) this heaviest of griefs that He has sent you.

I will say no more at this time. . . .

You can tell John we have actually begun translating that Icelandic Story from the German, and daily insist, what we can, on getting more or less (*less* for most part) of it put on paper. The labour I know well enough to be worth in itself nothing; but to poor me, able only for nothing, it has a perceptible, though infinitely small, value; and I mean to stick to it, if possible to the end.—Froude is coming to-day, of which I am glad a little; Allingham turned up above a week ago and has been a diligent

attendant every second day or so; he also is rather better than nothing. . . .

The Linlathen message also came; and Mary, on strict search, has found about 20 Erskine Letters;—I cannot for my life think what to say about Erskine that could be suitable for the Public it is meant for; but yet I suppose there will be no avoiding of the attempt to say something! I much dislike this kind of demand upon me (which comes far oftener than I could expect); but on reflecting, too, I should perhaps admit that in a case like Erskine's especially, it has its value to me, and its uses. . . .

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 349

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 14 December, 1871.

My dear Brother—Here is a Letter that came from Alick last night: all is in the usual way there, as you will be thankful to see,—especially poor old Brother John's readjustment of his housekeeping, which is a *novelty*, was welcome to me! I don't want the Letter *back ;* do you put it by somewhere, when done with.—I will also request you to get this £25 changed into a Canada set of dollars in the form of a Draft to poor old Brother John; in his new quarters it will be privately a kind of *anchor* to the poor old heart or imagination. Please send it me hither at your earliest convenience, and his *address* along with it, if you know that. Or one might address it to Alick's care, perhaps most fitly of all.

. . . Yesterday, in Lady Ashburton's brougham, . . . I drove out to Denmark Hill; a strangely misty, mournful,

silently *meaning*-ful, lonesome and beautiful drive to and from: Ruskin was not there; "gone to Town with his Cousin on business,"—which probably was just as well, in the mood and state I was in. Ruskin, I believe, is about quitting Denmark Hill altogether; going to Oxford and Coniston Water: I am very anxious about him.— . . .

LETTER 350

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 20 January, 1872.

My dear Brother— . . . I duly received your two Letters about the beginning of the week; and was much obliged for the trouble you had taken. Thornhill, especially Holm Hill and its memories remain with me always, upon what basis you well know; I am very glad to hear that poor Mrs. Russell is rather in an improving state, at least not worse, or visibly growing so; and that the honest old Doctor and she are not to have their household gods and innocent life-partnership swallowed in dark clouds, as all earthly households have to be, till a yet unknown time. Give my best regards to both of them by your next opportunity.

This book, *Bret Harte*, a recent American celebrity, may perhaps suit them for reading, or perhaps even you or Jean at Dumfries in the first place. It belongs intrinsically to Mary, to whom I made a gift of it some time ago; but she is willing to surrender it a while on this errand, having herself read it before. Bret Harte himself is a notable kind of object, a man altogether modelled upon Dickens, like Dickens seeking his heroes in the region of blackguardism and the gutters, where heroic magnanimities and benevolences, I believe, were never found; and de-

lineating them, like him, by ell-deep mimicry instead of penetration to the real root of them and their affairs,—which indeed lies much farther down! Like Dickens, however, he does the feat generally rather well: and I suppose will continue at the same moderate workmanship, tho' a man of more weight of metal than Dickens was. I heard first that he was still young, which made me think he might still mend; but by the last accounts he is towards 40; and I consider shaped for life. Read him, if you can, at Dumfries, then at Holm Hill; and let him fight his own battle.

. . . As I grope about, read *Snorro* again, etc., etc., I find a great many meanings attach themselves to those old Tryggvesons, Hakons, Olafs, and their work in this world; and *if* I knew Icelandic like you (and alas, if I had my own right hand, but not otherwise), I feel as if I could still write a rather bright and useful little book about them! which reminds me of the old rough proverb in Annandale dialect: "If ifs and ans were pots and pans!" In brief you shall have that Preface,* if I be spared a little while.

Adieu, dear Brother, for this day. . . .

Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 351

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 24 February, 1872.

My dear Brother—Punctual to its moment, and complete in every point and portion, came your answer of yesterday morning

* What Carlyle here calls a "Preface" was the commencement of his "Early Kings of Norway," of which more will be heard in subsequent letters.

during breakfast. I took your copy of the "*Symbolum*," * and while still drinking my coffee,—Mary's being done,—dictated to her three words for Tyndall, packed these and *Symbolum* into an envelope; and so had completely washed my hands of my engagement. A neat little job altogether: thank you much for enabling me to do it so compendiously. Nay, I think it was you who first led me to this beautiful little Goethe Poem, and that without you I should probably never have discovered it, certainly not so soon, if ever! which is another perhaps still more considerable favour.

We are working dreadfully, poor Mary and I, at that monster of a Norse Preface, or Sketch of the Early Kings of Norway; seldom did I undertake a more totally worthless thing, never anything at all which so bothered me in getting executed or came so near the impossible in this my fatal want of a right hand. . . . Mary talks of being actually done with the copying (as I will with the correcting) about the end of next week: you *shall* then see it, if it could do the least good to you or anybody. . . . I am reading Ruskin's Books in these evenings; . . . I find a real spiritual comfort in the noble fire, wrath, and inexorability with which he smites upon all base things and wide-spread public delusions; and insists relentlessly on having the ideal aimed at everywhere; for the rest I do not find him wise—headlong rather, and I might even say weak. But there is nothing like him in England in these other respects. . . .

* Goethe's "Mason-Lodge."

LETTER 352

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 27 April, 1872.

My dear Brother—About Thursday, then, I will expect you, —with many "wishes" (good journey, etc.), not needing expression here! Don't forget to tell us which *room* you will prefer. . . .

Please do bring down that *Norse-Kings MS.*, and the *Saga* withal may as well come, though about the latter I care little or nothing. The former cost me, poor Mary and me, a deal of trouble; and I could like well to have it put right in all details by such an opportunity. Indeed it strikes me you could not better fill your forenoons, while waiting on the question, "Vichy," than by a thorough revisal of this Piece,—in the light of your New *Norse* History (which also bring). I don't think I should like to part with many (or perhaps almost any) of those *anecdotic* insignificancies,—the whole Norse History being nothing to me save *anecdotes;*—but I should be very desirous to have everything *correct,* instead of disgracefully *not.* A tolerable (or even a fairly *legible*) Map of Norway would be a great acquisition; but, I suppose, that is impossible in these latitudes and habitudes! Think of all this and let us do our best.

. . . Adieu, dear Brother; let us hope to meet again in this poor world, very soon! It is surely a mercy of Heaven to us both, could we be but rightly thankful!

Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 353

To Miss Mary Carlyle Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 11 May, 1872.

. . . The Imperial Interview* passed yesterday without the least accident,—or, I think, the least real profit to either party. I was received with warm courtesy by the Count and Countess Bernstorff, who soon left me to myself in a very grand room † (which I knew of old); in about three minutes, Brandis entered for perhaps a minute and a half; and within another minute, entered (followed or escorted by Brandis, who flung the doors open) Imperial Majesty herself, with a blithe quick air and step, and a soft enough voice of welcome. She offered me her hand, which I kissed (according to rule); there were but two *chairs* in the room (set there on purpose no doubt); Majesty took one, I (not thinking, tho' I apologised afterwards) took the other; Brandis stood to a side;—and there the High Lady at once launched into an official kind of declaration of the "reasons why she wished to thank me," of the etc., etc., and in short, of the "*greet*ness" ‡ of a certain man, and how "that *Writer on Heroes* was himself a Hero!" This was her last word *on the chair*. Rising to her feet she said cheerily, "It was Odo

* With Her Majesty the Kaiserin of Deutschland.

† In Prussia House, Carlton House Terrace.

‡ Cobbett reports, of one of his Displays or Harangues in some manufacturing Town, that a working man with a little son on his arm respectfully asked, If he would be so kind as shake hands with this little Boy? Cobbett readily did so. "Theare now," said the proud Father to his Boy, "Thou can say, a' thy life, thou hast shooken hands wi' the greetest man in England!" Cobbett himself reports the important fact in next week's *Register*. (*Note by T. C. on a copy of this letter.*)

Russell who advised that I should see Carlyle, which I had often tried to do, but now I have done it!" and giving me her little hand, evidently to *shake*, this time, and kindly shaking mine with due expression of fare-you-well, graciously withdrew, and I saw her no more,—nor had had in the Interview, except listening, any active function whatever. Her English was not fluent, though correct enough; once or twice Brandis, once myself, helped her out with a word (—"*temoin?*" "witness," was *my* stroke of help): all I said otherwise was by way of parenthetic interruption; she did not seem to wish me to speak at all;—and indeed, I now guess, must have had her speech probably all by heart (but don't whisper *this* to any soul!),—which gives a slightly ridiculous character to the whole affair,—and entirely secures one's head against being *turned* with it!

She is a fine old Lady to look upon; turned of sixty, and considerably older-looking than your Mother; a pair of uncommonly bright, large and kind grey eyes are now the striking feature; but when young she must have been fairly beautiful. She is not tall, but of good medium size, still slim of shape; and I recognized in her both her Mother and Father, who were a smallish woman and a tall man. Her *dress* (of which I know not one particular, except that it had a brilliant *small-speckly* blue-and-gold look) seemed to me at once modest and magnificent.— . . .

LETTER 354

To John Forster, at Epsom.

Chelsea, 4th September, 1872.

Dear Forster—. . . Last night's thunder and rain deluges will have lightened everything a bit. . . . I am com-

ghostly solitary here, and neither God is predisposed to be so, in comparison. Seldom has London so little of raging noise and fume around me as even now; small still voices can speak to me, and thoughts high and mournful that wander through Eternity. Mournful exceedingly, yet also with gleams of very blessedness, and love stronger than death! Were not the fountains of tears quite dried in me, I could feel it a consolation to sit and weep. . . .

I finished my Shakespeare—Othello (in Dyce), —Othello murdering Desdemona, last night, with the loud thunder overhead! Torque of speaking machine!—Dyce's text, viz., seem to me fairly the best: at the same time for me it is simply intolerable. A wandering through the Gardens as of Paradise;—accompanied everywhere as with a whirlpool of barking curs, subterranean rats, apes, and irrational useless creatures!—

Let me hear again, as you promise, dear F., how you see you some day soon. With many best regards to the amiable one,

Yours always,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 888

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 26 December, 1872.

My dear Brother— . . . Mary and I are faithfully standing to our poor bit of work,* the translation hardly ended and mostly re-copied and put right; but it will still involve us in a good deal of petty task, pasting, shifting into new positions, etc. I often fear no silk purse can be made of Sowps, with,

* Carlyle had written on the 1st of January: "We [Mary and I] expect to begin our Schiller here to-morrow morning, and hope to make good progress."

though very honest, is intrinsically something of a sow's ear. On the whole it keeps my hands and head pretty full through the few working hours of the day;—and in that respect may be counted a kind of blessing to me;—Saupe's blotchings and my own bother with them being better than the poor gloomy meditations which I should otherwise awake to every morning. I have got several much superior Books about Schiller's early wanderings (especially one *Schwab*, which will be well worth your reading by and by): all these I am looking into and mean to read in some loose way; but I must avoid also carefully going into investigations and details on the subject; or even to *seem* to have taken much trouble with this "Supplement of 1872," or have made any serious study on what is so insignificant to me now; and upon a Book which I have always felt and declared to be entirely insignificant. Enough of all that for the present!

. . . Froude and Tyndall (as you doubtless know) are both in America; Tyndall lecturing in Washington by this time; Froude ditto in New York, with great splendour of reception,—as you see by the little slip inclosed, from his Wife last night; to be burnt when you have read it. Perhaps by this time you may have heard from young Emerson, who is walking hopefully St. James's Hospital; and came here last Sunday and said he would write to you. Perhaps he told you withal, what is a great secret, that Emerson Father, with his unmarried Daughter, is now on the seas for England! Actually so; but means to keep it secret all he can, being out of health and sent straightway for Italy; not till after some months in which, will he return and openly show himself to England; I fear he is not in a very good state of health,—perhaps beginning, like the

rest of us, to feel that he too is entering the gloomy valley of Old Age. Meanwhile I shall be greatly interested to see Emerson once again, on the terms there are. . . .

LETTER 356

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 2 November, 1872.

Dear Brother—. . . I have got, in the meanwhile, a great deal of interesting satisfaction from reading those other Books* about Schiller; which bring him so much more clearly than ever before my mind; and, along with him, so many memories, emotions and associations that now lie full fifty years behind me. He is upon the whole a most loveable fellow-man, full of affection, enthusiasm and nobleness of mind; but as a Poet, Man of Intellect, or otherwise of supreme talent in any kind, I do not recognise him more than heretofore. Poor Schiller, the account of his death, which I read yesternight the last thing (vividly described by Voss, who sat up with him twelve nights, and saw him the day before he died, look at his last little Baby with inexpressible love and *Wehmuth,* and then bury his head among the pillows in a flood of tears), brought me also to the edge of weeping, or even over the edge.

Last night, before all this, we had been dining with Forster, as you are to understand! Allingham and young Emerson besides our two selves were the only company. Emerson spoke to me of your Letter to him, and of his writing to you, as he had undertaken when I saw him last about two weeks ago. He now suddenly announces to us that he is just about leaving

* Schwab, Voss, etc.

London, were his Father once fairly arrived! He goes to France, I think, thence to America, for the sake of some privilege in the Boston Hospital, which he expects there. He was rather pleasant company last night,—much as we found him at Seaforth in August last. His Father it appears, he privately expects to arrive at Liverpool early next week; Father is then to be carried off to Chester for quiet's sake; to come almost incognito to London thereafter, and, with a minimum of delay, make for Egypt for the Winter. I made him, with sincerity, the offer of his old lodging in this house; but do not think he will accept. . . .

Of Froude's operations in America you probably hear through the Newspapers; something of it you may see in this week's *Public Opinion*, if you care to read it,—which is not much worth while. I see a good deal of Sir James (or Fitz-James) Stephen latterly: he is good solid company for intelligence, sincerity and information about industries, which, however, though really important to the world, are not so to me.* . . .

Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 357

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 29th November, 1872.

My dear Brother—. . . I have done nothing but read; only two of my books are worth anything: First, a little Pam-

* In a letter of later date (23 Dec.) Carlyle says of Sir James Stephen: "He volunteers weekly to visit me on Sunday with a long walk and long intelligent discourse, which however relates mainly to objects rather foreign to me, Indian matters, effete English Officiality in the Home Departments, projects of Codification, etc."

phlet of the Early English Text Society (which perhaps you have?) about the *Wälsche Gast*, which has really some interest. If you have not got it, say so, and a penny will bring it you. The 2nd Book is one by an Augustus Hare, Nephew of Julius and of *his* Brother Augustus; an artless wide-wandering sort of book; but of much interest to me; treating of all the Hares, Stanleys, the Bishops Heber, etc., etc., full of vanished personages whom I knew, and of letters and diaries from beautiful religious women (true *schöne Seelen* many of them), which has affected me more than any book I have read for years. My copy is from Miss Bromley's Library; but it is to be had in the London Library, I should think. Speak, if you want it; we will see what possibilities there are. . . .

LETTER 358

To John Forster, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Chelsea, 20 December, 1872.

Dear Forster—. . . Froude is raising a dreadful disturbance in America; your prophecy about him altogether coming true. . . . I never could, more than you, see what propriety there was in taking our extremely dirty Irish linen to wash it there, and call America to see. . . . Yet Ireland remains a deplorable phenomenon. . . . The biggest, richest and essentially the grandest Empire now under the sun, perpetually tormented with the meanest of dirty dish-clouts pinned to the tail of it, which might be settled, one would think, with a comparatively small investment of human genius! The "Curse of Cromwell" had completely done it at one time, and is clearly

the one elixir for the case,—*un*suitable for the "People's William," in a high degree.

One very wet day I went by appointment to Norton's. Saw Ruskin and the Norton party, children Sister and Mother, —all very nice, and Norton a man I like more and more. Ruskin good and affectionate. He was fallen into thick quiet despair again on the personal question; and meant all the more to go ahead with fire and sword upon the universal one. James FitzJames Stephen on a long walk each Sunday is the main company I have had. He is writing weekly an Article or two in the *Pall Mall*, busy on Law, and beating Mill's "Liberty" into small brayed glass (in a way rather wearisome to me); and indeed, I think, has a real stroke of work in him. . . .

LETTER 359

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Chelsea, 7 January, 1873.

My dear Brother—. . . Your account of poor old John's* death, tho' very brief, was very touching to me and abundantly clear. A death from weary Old Age alone, no disease visible, only a tabernacle worn out with eighty years of work, and the wheel at the cistern falling slower and slower till at length it silently stops. The way of all the earth; none of us will escape it, and to some of us it naturally seems close at hand. We have only to say in such dialect as we have, God's just and holy will be done.

I forget when it was I last wrote to you, dear Brother;

* Their half-brother, John Carlyle.

but suppose that since last Autumn you have heard little special of my history; and therefore I will begin there. John and I, after his return from France, escaped out of the sultry whirlpool of London down to the Southern coast of Devonshire (London smoke following us perceptibly for the first thirty miles; but the rest of the country green and beautiful as you can anywhere see). We went to a grand little Cottage overhanging the salt water; a place belonging to Lady Ashburton, —where, in 1865, I and Another, not now here, made our last considerable visit in this world. You may conceive my thoughts on coming back to it again after such a seven years as I have had! But we need not speak of that. I will say only that, in spite of my weakness, I walked a great deal, John oftenest accompanying; that the splendid Cottage was by no means proportionately adapted for lodging a weak old man, liable to great misery from sounds and the like; and that there, as everywhere, tho' the kindness shown us was supreme, one daily needed all the philosophy one had; however, I managed to get down every morning to the sea-side; where you could bathe at any hour, and there had a hearty swash in the sea, as the first thing done for the day. In the course of two weeks or so, I began to perceive some influence from this practice, and before the end of the month which was the limit of our stay there, I had judged it was an influence for good;—which I continue still to think it. The only kind of medical appliance that for the last twenty years has had any effect upon me at all. John staid with me a while after our return hither; after which he went to Dumfries, and from there I believe you have more than once heard of him, and from him. Of our other kindred the accounts are generally good; to the effect, Going on as usual. . . . For

myself, dear Brother, I have only to say that there has no work come out of me whatever, except an accidental and very simple bit of addition to the *Life of Schiller;* which, if my right hand had been my own, I could have finished in five or six days, tho' to poor Mary and me it cost seven or eight weeks of a very confused labour! This inability to write with my own right hand is a heavy calamity at present, and prevents all literary labour, of which otherwise I were now and then perhaps capable.—I think I must send you that pitiful bit of addition to *Schiller;* or rather the Schiller Volume altogether. It is to come out next month; soon after the end of February I expect you may have it. . . . Well may you fare, and brave may your lives be, yonder far over the sea!—Before very long I hope to write to you once again.

Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 360

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 5 Feb., 1873.

My dear Brother—. . . The Schiller Revise has still the latter half of it (two sheets and a half) in Robson's hands; on the day after to-morrow I can hope to discharge it also with equal ease, and so, wash my hands of that poor little enterprise forever and a day. It has turned out, after all the confusion poor Mary and I had with it, a better thing than I expected; and will do very well as an adjunct to *Schiller.*

. . . Poor Forster is still in great distress; not dangerously ill (thinks Quain) but really in a bad fit, he admits,—incessantly coughing, and with very little sleep. . . . Dur-

ing the whole of this misery he has been strenuously busy for me, upon a matter which *you* will much approve * when I tell you of it on our first meeting again, which I love to hope may not be far distant. . . .

Ever affectionately yours,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 361

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 22 March, 1873.

My dear Brother— . . . Yesterday was a miserable cold slobber of hail, rain and bitter wind. I made Miss Bromley take me up to Norton's (poor N. has had an attack of pneumonia, and been prisoner for many weeks, though now nearly well again); he is a fine, gentle, intelligent and affectionate creature, with whom I have always a pleasant, soothing and interesting dialogue when we meet,—the only fault yesterday was, I liked it too well, and staid too long. He read me a bit of a Letter which reported Emerson's safe arrival at Paris, with "his age renewed" by his Egyptian winter, and in particular, instead of the utterly bare, or slightly woolly scalp, a visible coat of hair again, or under way. I suppose he will be here in not many days; probably I told you already he contemplates six weeks in England. . . .

I will now have an hour of clear Reading, if it please Heaven, before I sally out.—With blessings on you all,

Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

* The making of his Will, in regard to which Forster's legal advice was of value.

LETTER 362

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 26th April, 1873.

My dear Brother— . . . In return I have next to nothing, or altogether nothing, of news to tell you. Except indeed that Emerson is just leaving us, and that except in Edinburgh, about ten days hence, I know not where there is any chance of your meeting him. He came down hither day before yesterday, sat about a couple of hours, talking cheerfully in his mild, modest, ingenious but rather theoretic way; and then rose inexorably to go for Forster's who had asked him to dinner for this (Saturday) night, but was to find him inexorably engaged elsewhere. So he went his way, and it is probable I shall see him no more, as he departs punctually to-morrow morning for Merthyr Tydvyll, Oxford, Manchester, etc., etc.; nothing fixed but that he *is to be* in Edinburgh, and that he sails with Norton from Liverpool on the 16th of next month. I think sometimes the Edinburgh University people should give him a Public Dinner; things of the kind have been proposed here, but given up, or perhaps declined; Edinburgh is perhaps the fitter place, if any place can be fit. Should you be writing to Masson, you might fling out a hint? . . .

Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 363

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 10th May, 1873.

My dear Brother— . . . Yesterday I took leave of Norton, who came down to have one last walk with me, but

to our regret the walk was interrupted by rain, and he had to call a cab, being rather on the sick list at present. . . . I was really sorry to part with Norton, and his interesting Family of little Motherless children, good Sister, and venerable Mother: he has been thro' Winter the most *human* of all the company I, from time to time, had. A pious-minded, cultivated, intelligent, much-suffering man. He has been five years absent from America, and is now to return One instead of Two as he left! He is off to-day for Oxford; will meet Emerson at Liverpool on Thursday next, whence Westward Ho! by the best Steamer they could fix on.

Yesterday I got a great shock when Norton told me, when we were stepping out into the Street, that John Mill was dead! I had heard no whisper of such a thing before; and a great black sheet of mournful more or less tragic memories, not about Mill alone, rushed down upon me! Poor Mill, he too has worked out his Life-Drama in sight of me; and that scene too has closed before my old eyes, though he was so much my junior! . . .

Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 364

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 20 Sept., 1873.

My dear Brother— . . . No. 5 here [Cheyne Row] was all as clean as new pins. . . . All had a calmness and correct composure which was mournfully beautiful to me. Mary's guidance of me through the transit,* and since and onwards,

* From Dumfries to Chelsea.

has been, what you may suppose it, mere kindness and affection. Unluckily, with all this I got only half a sleep in my own welcome bed, and was astonished and annoyed by various accursed sounds, miraculous intrusions of chanticleers and other phenomena;—of which I say nothing more except that they are all victoriously swept into the abyss again, and that last night, . . . I have at last got what may be called a good sound sleep, and feel as if I had fairly got over the hill, and were to have plain sailing and some tolerable composure and perhaps even some improvement for the time next coming. . . .

For the rest the days are oftenest really beautiful, brisk winds, often enough with spotted sunshine, the clearest sleekest streets for promenading, seldom any considerable rain, except by night, since we returned. I have also got a number of Books, all the critical Pamphlets about Goethe's *Faust* that are in the Library, and have sent for the others, while diligently reading those on hand. Except Falk, who treats of Goethe generally, those latter are all decidedly rather stupid;—but I feel not yet to have done with *Faust*, Part II., nor probably shall have done for some little while. . . . I also, with much earnestness, recommend to you some translation from the Icelandic, or other light work, which, far from burdening one's weak life, would, as I know by long experience, sensibly steady and cheer, and alleviate it. Let me beg of you to think seriously of this and take it as sound advice from your elder Brother. . . .

LETTER 365

To Dr. Carlyle.

Chelsea, 15 November, 1873.

My dear Brother—You sent me duly the FitzJames Stephen Lecture in the *Scotsman*, which I should not have seen otherwise so soon; it was carried off the same day by Froude as a thing he was eager to see. The second and concluding Lecture you most likely have to-day; and on Monday morning I may expect to see it here. Stephen had been talking of it to me more than once; and I found it a very curious piece indeed, delineating one of the most perfect dust-whirls of administrative Nihilism and absolute absurdities and impotencies; more like an Elective Government apparatus for Bedlam, elected and submitted to by Bedlam, than any sane apparatus ever known before;—and strangely enough, it is interlarded withal with the loyallest assurances every now and then that it is the one form of Government for us for an indefinite period; and that no change for the better can practically be contemplated. The second Lecture which was to shew us some shadow of the *per contra* side I shall be curious to see. Poor Stephen has evidently got intertwisted with Gladstonism and the prospect of the Solicitor-generalship to a distressing and bewildering degree. His Dundee failure of election has been the most awkward event: it cost him, they say, £800 of money; and the Gladstone Solicitor-generalship is gone from him like a knotless thread. . . . Both Froude and I are almost rather of opinion that he ought to join with Derby and by one bold

stroke cut loose from the People's William altogether; but I believe neither of us has yet spoken to him in that strain. He is a very honest man, Stephen, with a huge heavy stroke of work in him; needs a great deal of money for the big young family he has, and has at present no means of earning it but by Journalistic, Legal or other piece work.

Tuesday last I went again to dine at Forster's, Tennyson and Spedding [James] there and no other company. Tennyson was distinctly rather wearisome; nothing coming from him that did not smack of utter indolence, what one might almost call torpid sleepiness and stupor; all still enlivened, however, by the tone of boylike naïveté and total want of malice except against his *Quarterly* and other unfavourable Reviewers. . . . Spedding looked a good deal better; clean as spring water, serious, simple, something of reverend in his aspect. He has actually finished his Life of Bacon, the last page of it gone to press; a right notable feat for Spedding; which I emphatically praised. The eldest of his three beautiful nieces (Tom's daughters) is dead last autumn. Spedding gave me the history of the event in very calm but rather touching terms.—Forster still suffers a great deal in these cold windy and often foggy days; has not once been out, I should think, for almost two weeks back. . . .

Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 366

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 29 November, 1873.

My dear Brother— . . . I myself have been reading nothing German, merely wandering in mixed mood over Lanfrey,

Vol. IV., and certain other poor Napoleonic matters. Lanfrey's Book * is hard and dry, but not without intelligence, brevity and vigour; and says throughout the very worst that can be said of that wonderful man. It is not worth your buying, but it might be of your reading; in which case I could probably get it for you here. In *Lanfrey* Napoleon gradually delineates himself as the nearest approach ever made to Lucifer, otherwise Satan *Salthoun;* but I found there were grave omissions in that delineation and that the man was actually human after all. Hardly ever man so strangely situated and so strongly tempted in this world before! . . .

I got through my Taylor † Dinner, which was very splendid indeed; and was home about eleven at night, ready for one glass of sherry with two waters, pipe of Tobacco and two hours more of quiet reading. Lady Minto, blooming beautiful Countess, was the heroine of the evening; hero, our quasi-hero, Sir John Coleridge, a tall straight-up gentleman, utterly bald and clean washed, whom I had seen before. . . .

Adieu, dear Brother, four o'clock is striking and Night's wet curtains are swiftly rushing down. My love to Jean and the rest.

Blessings be with you all.

Ever your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

* "Histoire de Napoléon I.," by Pierre Lanfrey, in 5 vols. (1867–75).
† Sir Henry Taylor.

LETTER 367

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 1st Jan., 1874.

My dear Brother— . . . A second Book, entitled *Drummond of Hawthornden*, came from Masson about a week ago, which I read diligently and generally with great pleasure and approval. If you haven't got a copy, tell me, and I will send you this, for you are pretty sure to like it. . . . It is full of excellent correct information about Scotland in Drummond's time, and with successful skill, very considerable indeed, plants Drummond sitting observant in the middle of it. . . .

The two Canada Letters came duly and were worth reading, especially our poor Alick's, whom one is touched to see wending calmly and lovingly to the last, down the road we have all to go, each in his several mood, and with his peculiar burdens. . . . Ever since you heard last from me, I have been much occupied with the thought of a Public Statue to Knox; and especially with enquiries among sculptural or pictorial people I have had access to, about the possibilities of getting a real likeness of him and converting it into a Bronze Figure of real excellence. This seems to me the one difficulty in the matter; all other difficulties I consider to be easily superable. For I take them to consist essentially in the matter of money only, and I cannot for a moment believe that Scotland, to whom it is a positive disgrace to have no Monument to Knox, would, if properly applied to, withhold an abundance of money at least. Since Laing's last Letter, I wrote him a second, recording what researches I had

made as to that Torphichen Portrait, and the considerable approach to complete conviction or persuasion, that here was the actual point to begin with, viz.: That a thorough enquiry by *experts* in Scottish History and in Pictorial Antiquities should be made into this Picture; that photographs should be taken of it, etc., etc.; and that in short, if a reasonable conviction in the affirmative were once attained, the question should be put emphatically to all Scotland, Will you help us to make this into a suitable Bronze? Of the answer I have no doubt myself.

. . . In fact I have considerably set my heart on seeing a real Monument set up to Knox, as probably the last thing I shall meddle with in this world; and I won't give it up, though Laing has failed. Twenty years younger, I would have placed myself in the front and on the top of it; but, alas, at present all I can do is to give my poor £50 or £100 to it, to summon and invite competent persons to consider my proposal and fulfil it, if they can. . . . You might transcribe what I wrote to yourself (part of the last Letter you had, reporting what I meant to say to Laing) and send it off to Stirling Maxwell of Keir* . . . If Stirling say *Yes*, I will engage to stand by him so far as I have any feet left; nay, I think, if he and I both said *Yes*, with the proper emphasis, the thing would veritably take effect, and that

* In a letter of the 9th December, Carlyle proposed that a bronze statue of Knox should be set up in the centre of the College Square, Edinburgh, "in this way mutely proclaiming: 'The newest spiritualism of Scotland still understands this to be, in many and these the most important senses, its typical Scotsman; worthy to rank among the truest, noblest and bravest we ever bred; and a benefactor to Scotland, such as few ever were.' "—In the same letter he also suggested that Knox's "dwelling-house at the head of the Canongate" should be purchased by the city council of Edinburgh or by the whole of Scotland, and made into "a repository for authentic Knox remains, original editions of his Books, documents on the History of the Reformation, etc., etc."

particular "disgrace to Scotland" be at an end. . . . Dark night is coming down, dear Brother; and I must at length suddenly end.

With my love and blessing to you all,

Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 368

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 14 Feby., 1874.

. . . The day before yesterday His Prussian Excellency forwarded to me by registered parcel, all the Documents connected with our sublime elevation to the Prussian Order of Merit. I had a great deal of unwelcome bother reading that accursed *Cursivschrift* of theirs and making out what gasp of official twaddle I was expected to answer with; but that too, is all done; goes off to Berlin by this evening's post. The papers, all but one,—which enclosed a series of strict enquiries, all in *Cursivschrift*, as to my name, surname, place of birth, religion, social standing (a "Writer of Books"), place of abode, and connection with other Prussian honours,—have now gone back with clear answers affixed: and so we have done, thank Heaven, with this sublime nonentity for ever and a day. The Star or symbolical Decoration is really very pretty; a bright gold thing like a wheel with spokes, about the size of a crown piece, hung with a black ribbon, with silver edges. Mary has laid it by, punctually folded up, probably never more to meet the light in my time. But in sum, I am heartily glad to have got rid of the affair; and feel about it, after the fash is over, quite

as emphatically as I did at first, that had they sent me a ¼ lb. of good Tobacco the addition to my happiness had probably been suitabler and greater!

. . . Adieu, dear Brother.

Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 369

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 27th April, 1874.

My dear Brother—This day week then, Monday 4th, we expect you here. All is ready; Mrs. Warren, the very day she heard of your advent, silently flitted Maggie [Welsh],* without consulting either her or me, downstairs to the room on this floor! I hope you will arrive in good heart, and find everything swept and garnished.

. . . That invaluable object (the Somerville Portrait of Knox), I now learn is actually at hand; on Wednesday, the day after to-morrow, I am actually to find the Lady with the Picture ready; I bring it down hither, if Tait and some of his adjutors can set to work next day; and so the affair, following its due course, will be completed in due time.

On Friday next, Mayday, I am to give my first sitting for a Statuette by Boehm, of whom Mary, if you ask her, will give a full account. He seems to me by far the cleverest Sculptor or Artist, I have ever seen; the Statuette is for Lady Ashburton and at her urgent request; otherwise, in spite of my esteem for Boehm, I could hardly have consented at all to sit. He says he will complete the affair in four sittings, but I fear this

* Who was staying at Cheyne Row to give Miss Aitken a holiday.

will hardly be the case, and anyway I must take my chance; only I resolve six shall be the absolute maximum, and that will not hurt me much. . . .

Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 370

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

St. Brycedale, Kirkcaldy, N. B., 1 Sept., 1874.

My dear Brother—We packed up vigorously yesterday morning; cleared away into the Burntisland Railway and were swept across the sunny, breezy Firth in perfectly propitious circumstances;—and found here hospitably waiting us at the Kirkcaldy Station, our excellent host, P. Swan, with every appointment and equipment for the exercise of perfect human hospitality, as perfect, I believe, as I could experience in this world. . . . This is an excellent, solid, shady, silent and convenient human habitation, close behind Kirkcaldy, yet quiet as if many leagues from it; in brief, I seldom or never, in my days had a lodging so much to my mind, or that promised to be fitter for me so long as it will last. I have excellent Sea-bathing within few minutes walk; had yesterday afternoon, one of the finest plunges (much superior to Portobello in clearness of water). . . . For the rest, there is absolute composure to be found in the house and the most complete and practical liberty conceded and impressed upon you to do your own way; and as practical sum hitherto I feel myself better to-day than I have been, not only since leaving Chelsea, but for many months before that.

I find P. Swan really one of the most honest-hearted, simple and genuinely kind of men; a man of real natural munificence, fidelity, simplicity and human worth: and I really think you will find it a delightful place to pay a visit in, as I believe you had promised, whenever time suits. . . .

I will write no more, dear Brother, but go out into the sunshine, which you yourself would rather have me do. Many and many are the loving, mournful thoughts I send towards you all; but they are practically, alas, of little or no use and not to be expressed in words at all. God's blessing be upon you from the eldest to the youngest. Assure Sister Jean of my unalterable regard.

Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 371

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 17th Oct., 1874.

My dear Brother—This is the first you have heard of me since our parting in Dumfries. . . .

I am looking forward to the actual beginning of that thing about Knox's Picture (which, it is possible or probable, I may have to shift from *Fraser's Magazine* to some *Graphic* or other Newspaper, owing to the difficulties about the Prints needed in it); and as to employments, Heaven knows, the only one I have, that of reading Spedding's *Bacon*, is far from a seductive one! The illustrious business of the drain,* about which we had such a sputtering and fussing, has turned out to be a most

* Introduction of a system of drainage, from the garden to the street, passing under No. 5 Cheyne Row.

undeniable improvement in the department concerned with it, and, I now find, is, and was, all along considered by the Vestry and Inspector, to be a work of beneficence and of homage done to merit on their part,—and, in whole, does satisfy me as a real benefit, now that it is completely done, and well done. . . .

. . . Darwin picked us up one day on the Chelsea Embankment and drove me about a good while, not unpleasantly. He had never quitted Town again after we left him there. Tait came down the day before yesterday; . . . Trevelyan joined us just as we stepped out, and he is a fellow that never wants for talk. . . .

With a considerable shock I learned from Darwin that poor Twisleton was dead three or four days before, but where or how, Darwin could not tell me, nor could anybody I have yet seen. It is a true sadness to me, this sudden loss of poor Twisleton. He was a thoroughly honest man, of accurate, intelligent and courteous nature; always well affected to me; long ago, with the beautiful little Wife he had, much a favourite here. Brookfield too, I feel to be a loss in this impoverished condition of the field, and now left to my own reflections, more than I did when the event happened. . . .

Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 372

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 17 Nov., 1874.

My dear Brother—. . . The only event here, if event it can be called, is the actual beginning, or rather attempt at be-

ginning, that pitiful thing on Knox's Picture; which, with fingers and eyes of my own, I could finish almost within a week; . . . Probably the last thing I shall write in this world; comfortable solely, if even so, by the pious intention of it, if it can have any result at all.

. . . I have seen Ruskin, these three Saturdays in punctual sequence at two P.M., who promises to come weekly at the same day and hour, by way of holiday at London. I get but little real insight out of him, though he is full of friendliness and is aiming as if at the very stars; but his sensitive, flighty nature disqualifies him for earnest conversation and frank communication of his secret thoughts. . . .

God be ever with you all.

Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 373

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 1 Jan., 1875.

My dear Brother—The enclosed Letter* and copy of my answer ought to go to you as a family curiosity and secret: nobody whatever yet knows of it beyond our two selves, except Lady Derby, whom, I believe to be the contriver of the whole affair. You would have been surprised, all of you to have found unexpectedly your poor old Brother Tom converted into Sir Tom, Bart., but, alas, there was no danger at any moment of such a catastrophe. I do however truly admire the magnanimity of Dizzy in regard to me: he is the only man I almost

* From Disraeli, offering Carlyle a baronetcy and pension.

never spoke of except with contempt, and if there is anything of scurrility anywhere chargeable against me, I am sorry to own he is the subject of it; and yet see, here he comes with a pan of hot coals for my guilty head! I am on the whole gratified a little within my own dark heart at this mark of the good will of high people,—Dizzy by no means the chief of them, which has come to me now at the very end, when I can have the additional pleasure of answering "Alas, friends, it is of no use to me, and I will not have it." Enough, enough. Return me the official Letter, and say nothing about it beyond the walls of your own house.

The Knox (shame on us!) is never yet finished, but we are struggling forward with it, and it is really near done. Allingham,* I believe,—or rather I was going to believe till Mary put me right, does not want it,—but the fact is he *does* want it,—before the *Norse Kings* is done. And, Oh me, oh me, please the pigs, he shall have it!—. . . I send the current *Fraser* straight off to Maggie Welsh, knowing you can easily get it at Dumfries, if you like. And really there are some good Articles in it; especially one by the "Author of Supernatural Religion" (as I think) whose name, it appears, is not poor old Dr. Muir of Edinburgh, but one Pusey, Nephew of the Puseyite Oxford Pusey, and Son, I guess, of Philip Pusey,—an excellent gentleman whom I used to know. Be it by whom it will, the Article is worth your reading,—yours, if perhaps no other's in the house. There is also a Yankee Piece, the last in the No., of a very cheering and hopeful complexion. The *Fraser* people are to keep me 6 copies of the *Norse Kings*. . . .

All I can send is, from the bottom of my heart, best wishes

* William Allingham, the editor of *Fraser's Magazine*.

to you all, and silent prayer that God's mercy may still attend us while our pilgrimage continues.

Your ever affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 374

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 30 Jan., 1875.

My dear Brother— . . . I have not been worse in health since you last heard; in fact usually rather better; and at times in the midst of my multifarious infirmities there come glimpses or bright reminiscences of what I might in the language of flattery call *health,*—very singular to me, now wearing out my eightieth year. It is strange and wonderful to feel these glowings out again of intellectual and spiritual clearness, followed by base physical confusions of feeble old age; and indeed daily I am taught again the unfathomable mystery of what we call a *soul* radiant with heaven and yet capable of being overclouded and as it were being swallowed up by the bottomless mud it has to live in in this world!

We have never yet got absolutely done with that unfortunate Knox, tho' it seems to be hanging for weeks back on the very edge of *finis* and will surely be altogether ended in a day or two, and put into the drawer in clear *MS.*, to lie there and rest until it is wanted for final emendation with the printer waiting for it. All the three parts of the Norse affair are to be printed before *Knox* come. . . . Except for the encouragement and benefit it may give to poor Allingham, nothing could have induced

me to bother with it further; but the poor man was so passionately anxious, I could not find it in my heart to say No. . . .

Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 375

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Keston Lodge, Beckenham,
2 Sept., 1875.

My dear Brother—I understand you are for Peebles "the end of the week"; this day therefore, will be the last on which there will be any chance to catch you. I hope the poor packet will arrive before you go. Part of it you may notice is for Sister Jean, from whom I had three days ago, or four, a long and pleasant Letter which I fully mean to answer more deliberately.

We are fairly doing well here, not ill at all; and profiting what we can by the glorious element we have got dropped into. One of the strangest I ever had experience of. The silence day and night is the completest in the world, solitude, too, is without parallel: all manner of chances are given one for profitable thought, if one were capable of it, profitable though melancholy in a high degree.

Mary has been up to Chelsea and reports that everything is nearly complete and that from, and after, this week, we can gather ourselves and go home when we like. I think it is likely we may continue still for perhaps a week more. The first seven or eight nights, I had a great deal of haggling with my sleep; some of it painful, even wretched, though I always did get a portion of sleep, good or bad; but Mary at last took the thing in hand, and one afternoon contrived me what is equivalent to a

real Four-post bed without the roof and with only half a side; but complete in the bottom part against all inroad of light (big clothes-horse, with big red table-cover, firmly fixed with luggage straps), really an admirable bed in which I, every night since, sleep pretty much as well as usually at Chelsea, and find it an immense relief and comfort in comparison to what preceded.

All forenoon I sit reading, *sub dio;* exactly at half-past two, we get into a little shell of a four-wheeled carriage, light as a pease-cod and with an eminent little bay pony, quiet and swift, dash out for a drive of 14 or more miles, whithersoever seems good to us. We dine punctually at six and are in general making into bed about midnight. Except Darwin * who has gone to Southampton since, we have seen, as it were, absolutely nobody. Darwin and family pleased me very much and indeed it is a good while since I have seen any brother mortal that had more of true sociability and human attraction for me. Erasmus [Darwin] we understand to be still in London, but that there is a chance for his coming down hither before we quite go away. . . . We saw Ruskin's Allen one day at Sunnyside, Orpington, and got from him the *Fors* of this month (which is good for little), and a whole half dozen or more of other little and bigger books, which I find to be superior stuff, and have begun to read with real interest. Michelet, several days ago I finished out; a most wonderful book,†—wonderful, not admirable; for it goes all dancing to one like a chaos; many parts of it difficult to under-

* Charles.

† *Histoire de France,* by Jules Michelet (Paris, 1871–4). Carlyle's estimation of this work grew more favourable on further reading; he had the volumes expensively bound; and he cordially contributed to the "Michelet Memorial" in 1877.

stand, with all one's previous knowledge of the subject, and totally unintelligible without; and the general result not the victory of the Reformation and partial restoration of God's truth, but what M. calls the *Renaissance*, meaning thereby restoration or invention of the Ballot-box and, for culmination, the outburst and performance of the French Revolution; a fine genial creature, too, this M., tho' so wayward and from oneself so diverse. I design to have his Volumes bound, however, and you shall read them if you have a mind.

Adieu, dear Brother; there is no right room for more. Send back poor old Alick's photograph (very sad and very touching to me); . . .

My heartfelt love to Jean and all of you.

Ever your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 376

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 6th Novr., 1875.

My dear Brother— . . . A good number of people are by this time come to Town; indeed I think plenty, or more than enough for my purposes, nobody's "company" is of high interest to me, but perhaps is advantageous sometimes by inducing reasonable talk, instead of brooding silence. Lecky and Allingham are my most frequent visitors; American Motley, a man of more gifts and deeper character than either, is back in England; still very infirm and, no doubt, very sorrowful,—I called the other day; but only left a card and expect him here when things favour. . . . I have roughly translated that "Spiritual"

fraction* of Goethe's and enclose it for you to-day. Mary says nobody can read it; but I doubt not you, with the help of the original, will make it out; and I want your serious consideration of it; and any help you can give me in mending it! "*Tohu wa Bohu*," for instance, evidently means Chaos come again; but where does the phrase come from, will any of your Dictionaries indicate? also, what is "Hermann?" and what are his "Communications?" . . . I am now fixed down to Thucydides by Dean Smith, a good translation, now above a hundred years old. It is not extremely interesting, but it is wise, solid and human, in grand and noble contrast with almost anything that is written now.

Ruskin has not sent the *Fors Clavigera* this month, hitherto. Does that mean anything? I fear it does not mean that he has given it up altogether!

Your affectionate Brother,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 377

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 13th Novr., 1875.

My dear Brother— . . . It was very kind of you to take so much charge of the *Geistes-Epochen*. I turned up all your references in Goethe and carefully read them; I have found also marked in the London Library Catalogue both the Hermann book you mention, and several others; these also I ought to look into, and will try; but, alas, the days are so dark and unfavourable just now. I gather, in general, that Goethe (whatever

* The *Geistes-Epochen*. See *Nachgel. Werke*, XLIX. 5 (Stuttgart u. Tübingen, 1833).

Hermann might do), means by this little Piece a bird's eye view of the whole history of human Religious speculation; including Christian Theology as well as others, from the first origin of man in this world onward to the times we have now got to, which are to *Tohu wa Bohu* (Chaos thrice confounded), such a *pluister* of black stupidities, hypocrisies and bottomless basenesses of mind as "even the Spirit of God," says Goethe, "could not reduce into a world worthy of him!"—I strive to believe that in the latter clause Goethe is mistaken, and that the "Spirit of God" is equal to all emergencies; but the passage, as a feature of Goethe, is very remarkable to me.—You need not by any means copy the foul sheet you have got; but merely, in carefully reading it over, help out, or correct, the translation, with all your skill, in particular words and phrases, as you go along. That will be trouble enough and far too much to have put you to in regard to such a matter. . . .

Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 378

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 20 Nov., 1875.

My dear Brother— . . . Two or three days ago I finished my Thucydides with great esteem and here and there great admiration for the Author's spiritual qualities, though the History, such distance intervening between the Historian and us, is by no means altogether luminous to a modern reader,—so many things unknown to him, which were common-place and known to everybody while the Author wrote. Kirkpatrick's

Letter about Dante and him was also welcome and estimable to me. I do find points of notable similarity between the two men, especially their brevity, seriousness and pregnant force of expression; but the wild wail of unutterable affection that runs through Dante, has no expression, or almost none, in Thucydides, who indeed may be said to have no religion, or none to speak of, in comparison with Dante. In the last two days by way of elucidating dark points in Thucydides, I have taken to Plutarch (Clough's excellent Edition), and find him, too, a very estimable man, though of a different type. Reading, alas, is a poor resource in comparison with writing; but of reading one should make the most; the difference between a good author and a bad is literally immense! . . .

There has come a pleasant enough Note from Norton in America; which, as not yet answered, I do not enclose to-day; there has also arrived from Harvard University a big Doctor's Diploma and sublime little Letter from the President of Harvard College, with which I know not yet what to do; never having been consulted upon it, and being resolute never to accept such a Title and yet reluctant to fling the whole affair irreverently in their faces, good souls who meant to gratify me highly.*

. . . With my kindest love and blessings to you all,

Ever your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

* Carlyle made an exception in this case and accepted the diploma in the spirit in which it was offered.

LETTER 379

Bismarck to Carlyle.

Berlin, 2 December, 1875.

Hochgeehrter Herr—Die Feier Ihres siebzigsten [achtzigsten] Geburtstages geht auch Deutschland an, und Ihnen darf ich das ja in meiner Muttersprache sagen. Wie Sie bei Ihren Landsleuten Schiller eingeführt, so haben Sie den Deutschen unsern grossen Preussen König in seiner vollen Gestalt, wie eine lebende Bildsäule, hingestellt. Was Sie vor langen Jahren von dem "heldenhaften" Schriftsteller gesagt, er stehe unter dem edlen Zwange, wahr sein zu müssen, hat sich an Ihnen selbst erfüllt; aber glücklicher als diejenigen, über welche Sie damals sprachen, freuen Sie Sich des Geschaffenen und schaffen weiter in reicher Kraft, die Ihnen Gott noch lange erhalten wolle. Empfangen Sie mit meinen herzlichen Glückwunsch die Versicherung meiner aufrichtigen Hochachtung. BISMARCK.

Translation:

Highly honoured Sir—The celebration of your seventieth [eightieth] birthday concerns Germany too, and to you I may say that in my mother tongue. As you introduced Schiller to your countrymen, so you have placed before the Germans our great Prussian King in his full figure, like a living statue. What you said long years ago of the "Hero as Man of Letters,"—that he is under the noble obligation to be true,—has been fulfilled in yourself; but, more fortunate than those of whom you then

spoke, you may rejoice in what you have accomplished, and continue your work in full vigour, which may God long preserve to you. Accept with my cordial congratulations the assurance of my sincere respect. BISMARCK.

LETTER 380

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 4th Dec., 1875.

My dear Brother—There has been this day a complete whirlwind of Birthday Gifts and congratulations, about the poor arrival of my 80th, and probably last 4th of Decr,—from the whole of which Mary and Jean,* with the good sense of the senders, have mercifully delivered me; so that I have got little harm from them, which is a mercy. All this ended, there has come down a dark sleety cloud, more suitable for midnight, in regard to which, I have set down Mary with two candles, to write a word or two to you, generally announcing the thing and copying the two most remarkable of these Birthday documents, both of them from Berlin, with purpose to send you at least, a *selection* from the others, were a new day, with visible, or presumable, sun once come. Prince Bismarck, you will observe, thinks it is my *70th* Birthday, which is enough to quench any vanity one might have on a Missive from such a man: but I own to being truly pleased with the word or two he says about *Friedrich*, which seems to me a valuable memorial and certificate of the pains I took in that matter,—not unwelcome in the circumstances.

* Mrs. Aitken, now visiting at Chelsea.

Besides German Documents, more or less remarkable, there is an Edinburgh Affair, got up, I think, by Masson, which has issued in a fine Gold Medal, done by Boehm, and an Address with many signatures appended; of which you shall hear more specially by and by. Let this, with the copies accompanying, suffice at present on that head. . . . There has come a Letter from Canada Tom, yesterday morning; which distresses us all, announcing the great frailty and constant suffering of poor Alick, who perhaps will not survive me, as by nature he should. God bless him and me and all of us! Mary has much to do, and Forster has positively, by the most obstinate persistence, managed to have us all to dine to-night; so at present I will not add another word.—God's blessing on you all. T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 381.*

To Prince Bismarck.

Chelsea, 10th December, 1875.

Sir.—On Saturday morning, which was my eightieth, and probably enough my last, Birthday, I was honoured with a Letter, by far the remarkablest, the least expected and the most agreeable that came to me on that occasion. This is the noble, wise, sincere and generous Letter which you have been pleased to write, and which I read with very great surprise and very great and lasting pleasure. Permit me to say that no honour could have been done to me, which I should have valued so much, or which shall live more brightly in my

* For a copy of this letter, I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. Leonard L. Mackall, of Berlin, who obtained an Official Transcript from the Foreign Office there.

thoughts for the rest of my time in this world. What you deign to say of my poor History of your great King Friedrich seems to me the most pertinent and flattering utterance I have yet anywhere heard on that subject; and I am truly proud of it from such a quarter.

With very great sincerity, I warmly thank you for your goodness; and shall continue to wish for you, as I have long done, every prosperity in your great and noble career, and that God may grant you years and strength to fulfil, or carry beyond risk of failure, the grand and salutary enterprise in which you have already gone so far, in sight of all the world.

I have the honour to be and remain,

Sir,

Your obliged and obedient servant,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 382

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 15 December, 1875.

My dear Brother—. . . My consolation is any bit of good reading. Plutarch at present is my chief resource, and composes the ruffled hair of one's back in a sensible degree, as the speech of one wise, clear and true man can smooth down the loud inanity of many fools and idiots when they are gone.—As to the Edinburgh Medal,* I understand only that there are

* By the "Edinburgh Medal" Carlyle means the gold medal struck in commemoration of his eightieth birthday, which, together with an address signed by the more important literary, scientific, etc., men and women of the time to the number of about six score, was considerately handed in to Carlyle without needless formality and in the quietest man-

to be Silver Medals at a guinea, and Bronze ones at five shillings; but where they are to be had, or when, I have no personal knowledge. . . . Boehm it appears, had nothing to do with it, except furnishing the design in wax.

The answers to all that wheelbarrowful of Letters, etc., were undertaken by Mary. . . . The answer to Bismarck, I with a great effort, painfully dictated; as to his Letter itself, it is too big and too precious to me for sending you by Post; but Mary undertakes to furnish you with a verbatim copy, intelligible to the last comma of it, within this cover. . . .

Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

ner devisable. The project of the medal and address originated with Mr. Arthur Laurenson; and the wording of the address was the work of Mr. John Morley and Professor Masson. It reads as follows:

TO THOMAS CARLYLE.

4th December, 1875.

Sir,

We beg leave, on this interesting and memorable anniversary, to tender you the expression of our respectful good wishes.

Not a few of the voices which it would have been dearest to you to hear to-day are silent in death. There may perhaps be some compensation in the assurance of the reverent sympathy and affectionate gratitude of many thousands of living men and women, throughout the British Islands and elsewhere, who have derived delight and inspiration from the noble series of your writings, and who have noted also how powerfully the world has been influenced by your great personal example. A whole generation has elapsed since you described for us the Hero as a Man of Letters. We congratulate you and ourselves on the spacious fulness of years which has enabled you to sustain this rare dignity among mankind in all its possible splendour and completeness. It is a matter for general rejoicing that a teacher whose genius and achievements have lent radiance to his time still dwells amidst us; and our hope is that you may yet long continue in fair health, to feel how much you are loved and honoured, and to rest in the retrospect of a brave and illustrious life.

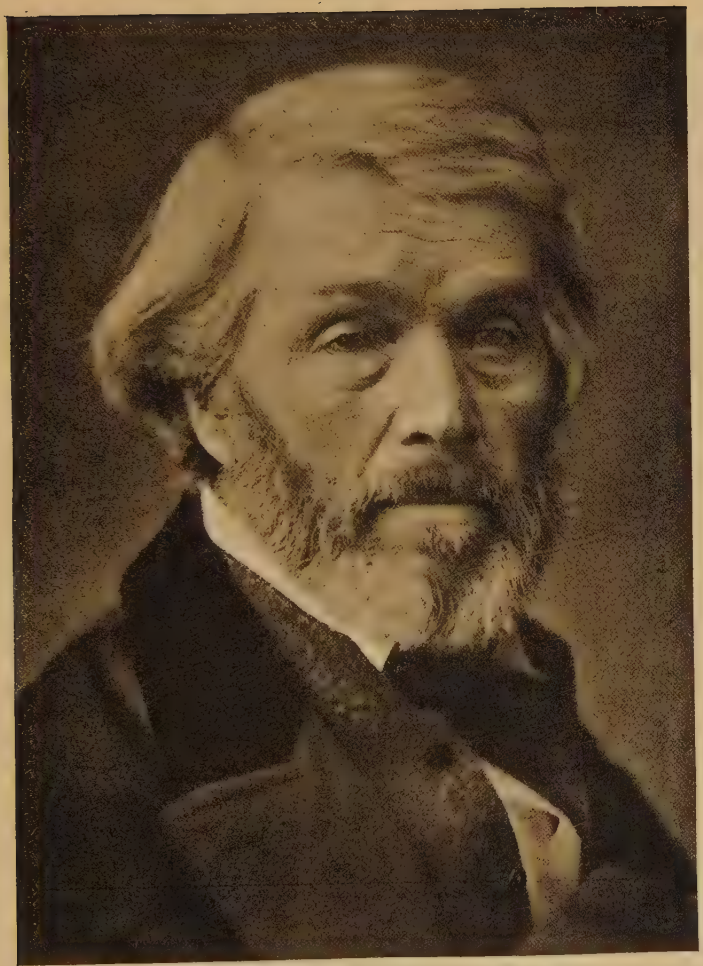
We request you to do us the honour to accept the accompanying copy

of a Medal, designed by Mr. J. E. Boehm, which has been struck in commemoration of the day.

We remain, Sir,

Yours with deep respect,

Thomas Aird
Wm. Allingham
Alex. Bain
Thos. S. Baynes
Jno. S. Blackie
J. E. Boehm
W. Boxall
W. Brodie, R.S.A.
John Brown, M.D.
Rt. Browning
John Caird
Ed. Caird
H. Calderwood
Lewis Campbell
Rt. Carruthers
Edwin Chadwick
Fred. Chapman
Henry Cole
Thos. Constable
Arch. Constable
Geo. L. Craik
D. M. Craik
F. Cunningham
Chas. Darwin
Eras. Darwin
J. Ll. Davies
Jas. Donaldson
David Douglas
Ed. Dowden
Geo. Eliot
E. FitzGerald
P. FitzGerald
Robert Flint
John Forster
W. E. Forster
A. M. Fox (for R.W. Fox)
A. C. Fraser
Houghton
Richd. Garnett
Ad. Gifford
John Gordon
A. Grant
J. R. Green
Alex. B. Grosart
Geo. Grove
Wm. Hanna
R. P. Harding
T. Duffus Hardy
Frd. Harrison
Robt. Herdman
W. B. Hodgson
Jos. D. Hooker
Robert Horn
Thos. Hughes
T. H. Huxley
Alex. Ireland
William Jack
R. C. Jebb
David Laing
S. Laurence
Ar. Laurenson
W. E. H. Lecky
G. H. Lewes
J. N. Lockyer
Jno. Lubbock
E. L. Lushington
Lyttelton
A. J. G. Mackay
Alex. Macmillan
Hen. S. Maine
Theo. Martin
Hel. F. Martin
Har. Martineau
David Masson
Henry Morley
John Morley
Ch. Ed. Mudie
F. Max Müller
Chas. Neaves
M. O. W. Oliphant
Eliza A. Orme
Richd. Owen
Noël Paton
W. F. Pollock
Richard Quain
Henry Reeve
Mary Rich
Henry Cowper
Alex. Russel
W. Y. Sellar
Hen. Sidgwick
Sam. Spalding
Jas. Spedding
W. Spottiswoode
A. P. Stanley
Godf. Lushington
Ver. Lushington
J. F. Stephen
Leslie Stephen
J. H. Stirling
Susan Stirling
Pat. D. Swan
Tom Taylor
W. C. Temple
A. Tennyson
A. I. Thackeray
W. H. Thompson
G. O. Trevelyan
Anth. Trollope
Jno. Tulloch
G. S. Venables
John Tyndall
J. Veitch
A. W. Ward
H. Wedgwood
F. E. H. Wedgwood
W. Al. Wright
J. R. Seeley
W. S. Maxwell



From a photo. by Elliott & Fry

THOMAS CARLYLE

LETTER 383

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 5th Feby., 1876.

My dear Brother—I am just returned from Kensal Green and poor Forster's funeral, which has occupied me in personal activity for all the morning (indeed a good part of the night); but which, thanks in great part to Mary's precautions and assiduities, I don't think has done me any special damage,—great as have been the confusions, *fasheries* and chaotic sorrows and reflections connected with it and him, ever since his sudden removal from among us. Nobody, I believe, expected so sudden a death. I had called at the door on Sunday last and there met Dr. Quain just stepping out, who told me cheerfully that Forster, who had been suffering much in previous days, was to-day a shade better. Tuesday morning following, Quain was sent for, hurriedly between eight and nine; and before twelve, appeared here, and by cautious degrees informed me, with considerable emotion of his own, that poor Forster was no more. It is the end of a chapter in my life, which had lasted, with unwearied kindness and helpfulness wherever possible on Forster's part, for above forty years. To-day contrary to expectations, I found myself next after Lord Lytton, constituted chief mourner; I and the Lawyer Chitty along with Lytton, leading the mournful procession, which was at an hour much too early for me. Mary, however, had provided everything that was possible to secure me from trouble or injury; and I got home accompanied by Froude, in Mrs. Forster's own carriage about

half-past 12, and have now at least got into natural temperature again, and hope there is no injury done. The event is really a sorrowful one, and practically a very considerable loss; but in all cases we have to adjust ourselves under it, and be thankful for what of human good there has been in it, without repining that it has come to an end. To poor Forster himself, it has clearly been an immense deliverance from long years of pain and distress. . . .

Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 384

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada.

Chelsea, 15 February, 1876.

My dear Brother—. . . There are few days in which you are not vividly present to my thoughts; and especially since that bodily disorder fell upon you, I and all of us are anxious and interested about you. I figure you painfully as held down by your bodily sufferings and imprisoned in the house, under the fierce Canadian Winter; and often and often ask myself how my poor old Alick is getting on, oppressed with burdens from which even I am comparatively free. God be with him and assist him, is all I can say to myself! . . . Your cold I figure to myself as far sharper and severer; but on the other hand your sky is oftenest perfectly free; and you have the blessing of pure light in abundance, which is many times wanting here. . . .

Along with this, or perhaps a day or two before, you will receive from the Bank a document bearing Adamson of the

British Linen Company's signature for the amount of £150, converted into dollars. This I beg you to accept as a small Newyear's Gift to the Brother who for so many scores of years now has been dear and true to me. To yourself in your imprisonment I fear it cannot do much good, but among your loved ones you may find beneficent use for it; if there is anything of useful that it can procure for yourself, right welcome is my dear Brother Alick to it, and to much more. Please tell some of them to send me word in the shortest of Letters that this poor little transaction is successfully completed.

I am myself older than you and by nature ought to be weaker; and certainly I am grown as weak almost as if I were a second time a baby: but, by the great goodness of Heaven, I am as it were quite free from bodily disease, and have no illness upon me except simply what is implied in the word old-age. Often enough I feel weary of the empty, painful and idle existence I now lead; but the suggestion is never far off, that God's will is the true will for us all in all things; and I look forward with my best patience for the hour that is ever drawing nigher, when the wearied soul shall be summoned to its rest, such "rest" as God's holy will has appointed and as no man knows, has known, or ever shall know. Perfect submission to that holy will, be it according to our own poor wishes or against them, is for all mortals the one perfect rule.

. . . My love and blessing to one and all of you.

Ever your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 385

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 22 April, 1876.

My dear Brother—Your letter came to us yesterday, with accounts from all the Annandale kindred and the cheerful prediction that you are coming to us very soon. . . .

We are all here in our common way, nothing worth reporting except what already has made you all sad, the mournful news from Canada. Poor Alick,* he is cut away from us; and we shall behold his face no more nor think of him as being of the earth any more; the much struggling, ever-true and valiant Brother is forever gone. To himself, in the state he was in, it can be considered only as a blessed relief; but it strikes me heavily, that he is gone before myself, that I who should in the course of nature have gone before him am left among the mourners, instead of being the mourned. Young Alick's account of his death is altogether interesting and brings one as it were present to the scene. A scene of sublime simplicity, great and solemn under the humblest forms. That question of his when his eyes were already shut and his mind wavering before the last finis of all, "Is Tom coming from Edinburgh the morn?" will never leave me, should I live for a hundred years. Poor Alick, my ever faithful Brother, come back across wide oceans and long decades of time to the scenes of Brotherly companionship with me; and going out of the world, as it were, with his hand in mine. Many times he convoyed me to meet the Dumfries Coach, or to bring me home from it, and full

* Carlyle's brother Alexander died on the 30th of March, 1876.

of bright and perfect affection always were those meetings and partings of ours. It is a strange thing to me that little question of his and comes up continually on me, not with common sorrow only, but with a tenderness and strangeness which much affect me. Be sure you send us back safely the Letter of young Alick; the hasty notices in it are and will continue very precious.

There is nothing that I can think worthy of writing about to-day. . . .

Your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 386

To Thomas Carlyle, Junr., Brantford, Canada.

Chelsea, 4 May, 1876.

Dear Nephew Tom—Yesterday morning your sad Letter reached me; and to-day in spite of my weakness I must write you a word of sympathy and mournful affection. For a good many weeks past, ever since your Sister Maggie's Letter to me here, I had a sad and painful assurance in me, which was shared by all, that the fatal end could not be distant. We hoped, like you, that, the gloom of Winter being nearly over, the Spring with its sunshine might produce some temporary alleviation; but ever from that day your Father's sad image fixed itself in my mind, and a thousand thoughts and tender recollections of him were my continual companions. At last unexpectedly, on the 20th of April last your Brother Alick's Letter came to his Cousin Mary, with the news that all was now ended; and that the kindest and truest-hearted of Brothers was gone forever. For himself, so loaded with pain, one could only regard the

event as a beneficent deliverance; but the shock we all had from it was heavy and sore. There never was a kinder Brother than he, from his earliest years and without break throughout life, was to me. TRUE as steel he ever was, and with a fund of tenderness, strange in one of so fiery a temper; a man of infinite talent, too, had it ever been developed by friendly fortune; I never knew a more faithful, ingenious and valiant man.* He was, withal, the first human being I ever came to friendship and familiarity with in this world; and our hearts were knit together by a thousand ties. Very beautiful, very sad and tender are the endless recollections I have of him, which must continue with me as companions while I live. No doubt similar thoughts dwelt in his mind about me, and it seems were ever present with him. Nothing has affected me more than what Alick mentions in his Letter, that in the wanderings of mind in the last hours of his life your Father asked repeatedly "If Brother Tom were not coming from Edinburgh to-morrow." Ah me, ah me, can

*Carlyle, writing in September, 1866, says (in a note on the "German Memoir" of himself by Dr. Althaus): "The Farmer beside us [at Craigenputtock] for the first three or two years, was my next Brother Alexander, an altogether ingenious, witty, shifty, valiant and indignant yet tender and deeply affectionate man; who contrived for us and self multifarious inventions and improvements in the original chaos there, till it became cosmic in fair measure; he was a great treasure to me, and something of a real companion too, having many thoughts in him, got from a certain modicum of good reading, and from much of serious reflexion, with a bright rustic faculty of insight, and fine just sympathies, to work by, in his limited world. He was given to banter, could be bitterly sarcastic, bitter and fiery on the dog-kind, for whom his contempt was infinite, his tolerance far too small. Yet I have heard from him touches of a most genial sense of the ridiculous, and little spurts of a mockery which was soft as new-milk just flavoured with the best cognac; and which tickled you into the very heart with a kindly laughter such as I might call superlative. How my poor Jeannie did enjoy these touches of his, and recited and repeated them in their wild Annandale accent!"

I ever forget these words? He always escorted me out to meet the Dumfries Coach near Moffat, and back again generally from Moffat, when I was returning, a right glad man on these latter occasions, a quietly sad but always helpful one on the former. . . .

I will beg you now further to send me some lucid account of family affairs at Bield and what new arrangements and settlements are made or contemplated in this great change. Make my loving regards to your poor Mother; be gentle and good to her, all of you,—I need not bid you. Your Sister Jane has not written to me for a long while. Tell her, too, I wish she would. With my best blessings on you all, and prayers that your lives may be worthy of him who has gone,

Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 387

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 19 May, 1877.

My dear Brother— . . . I have had a great many miscellaneous and mostly come-of-will visitors. They, and even the customary sort, are nearly altogether a sorrow and an encumbrance to me. The earth grows very solitary when all our loved ones are faded away to the Unseen Land. Yesterday Lady Ashburton was here, her Mary and she, in good trim and extremely kind. . . . Froude has been away "fishing," for a week, to be out of the way of questions about the "Torpedo" * which you read in the *Times*. There seems to be a hope for the

* Carlyle's letter to the *Times* of the 5th inst. on the Russo-Turkish War.

present that Dizzy is crippled in regard to his Turk War or a war of any kind: . . . for certain he refuses altogether to speak in the House of Lords, and one sometimes hears that he is losing his memory, etc.; and in brief, that there is no chance of his ever trying to become a Chatham in this world to which he has long been a disgrace, in all wise men's opinion, and now what may be called a continually minatory terror and curse. . . .

The Book * you get with this has given great satisfaction here far beyond what was expected,—a beautiful, tender and melodious, self-drawn picture of a Scottish human soul whom one finds to be both humble and high and, on the whole, pathetically welcome to one's heart. The De Quincey book, I find, is totally unknown here, and indeed I think, is never likely to circulate much, nor De Quincey himself with his strange organization, and pretty faculties, to come much into vogue again. . . .

Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 388

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 29 May, 1877.

My dear Brother—I confidently meant to have written on Saturday last, but found myself in the hands of Millais, the Painter, and without time for that or any such operation. Millais still keeps hold of me for four days more now, this and Sunday my only holidays from him hitherto, and I see not yet what will be the day of my deliverance. Millais seems to be in

* The book was probably the "Life of a Scotch Naturalist" (Thomas Edward), by S. Smiles.

a state of almost frenzy about finishing with the extremest perfection his surprising and difficult task; evidently a worthy man. Mary went with me yesterday to see, and had doubts privately as to what the success would be; but indeed it can, with my complete acquiescence, be what it will. For the third and last time I am in the hands of a best Painter in England (Watts, Legros, Millais), and with that I will consider the small quasi-duty of leaving some conceivable likeness of myself as altogether finished.

You asked me lately as to my choice of a place of burial. A good many years ago, that was done, and it is marked in my Will that I am to rest in the Kirkyard of Ecclefechan, as near as possible to my Father and Mother.—The only other thing that haunts me with a sense of incumbency as a thing yet to do, is that of writing something about poor [John] Forster in memory of his great kindness to me ever since I was left alone in the world; but I find it extremely difficult,—owing considerably to my total want of *hand power!* This is perfectly true; and you know not, my dear Brother, what a treasure you still have, which I have altogether lost. Forster's Bequest to the Kensington Museum has been formally put in order and set forth to the public;* I missed going to the private view in spite of Mary's urgency, representing the great desire of Mrs. Forster: I could not manage it that day. . . .

Ever your affectionate Brother

T. Carlyle.

* Carlyle's letters to] John Forster were contained in this bequest. For copies of such of them as are printed in the present volumes, I am indebted to Mr. David Wilson, author of "Mr. Froude and Carlyle."

LETTER 389

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries

Chelsea, 29 Sept., 1877.

My dear Brother— . . . I have myself been reading for the last ten days in *Suetonius*, of which I got two translations, an English and a French, both rather good, and the latter of them furnished with the original Latin in sight, but without any annotation for which I apply, more or less successfully, to the English one. I remember long ago finding among your Books, at Scotsbrig, on a rainy day, a translation by L'Estrange, which I read with great entertainment; no doubt this is still among your Books, and I could almost wish you to seek it out again and try it. I have now got before me a French translation of the *Historiæ Augustæ* of which I caught the original in the London Library, and mean to attack next. I don't know if I ever told you, that in the course of the late months, I read Gibbon all over again, with various reflections naturally, and especially with a considerable abatement of my admiration for Gibbon's talent, in all particulars except that of copious and faithful reading, which is certainly very great.—You never tell me what you are reading, or how your time is occupied, which defect I would humbly pray you to amend in some measure.

. . . I am very idle, as you see, and lead mostly a solitary life; my health is not to be complained of. . . . I go down to the bottom of the Embankment nearly every morning, and almost daily in the afternoon, fly off in a Brompton omnibus on the route we used to go last year. . . .

LETTER 390

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 27 Oct., 1877.

My dear Brother— . . . I have had various Roman Books, as you have heard, but am for the present out of these, and into the Lives of the Saints, the Hermits of the Thebaid, an old French book in three dumpy octavos, translated by Arnauld of the Port Royal, written in Greek sometimes, in Latin other times, by St. Jerome, Athanasius, etc., etc.,—which is occasionally very interesting, but far oftener drearily wandering in clouds of superstitious credulity, of which one can take no hold. A very different book has been that just published by Victor Hugo on the late Napoleon's *Coup d'Etat*.* It is in pieces, very clever, but such pieces (character of Louis, called Napoleon, of Morny and a few others) rise up like bright little islands in a dim sea of infinite details which, to an outsider, like myself, are of little or no value. The Book is not mine, nor do I know if it is in the London Library. I by no means think it is worth your buying, and indeed, this is but the first vol. of it,—foolish book by a most ingenious, clever man; to whom Democracy and the French Revolution are the holy of holies. . . . Lecky lent me the Lives of the Saints, etc., and has many books, especially translations into French. He is a capital Latinist, I think; but seems to have little more Greek than myself,—a very friendly polite man. . . . The day before yesterday, I finished Hanna's second volume on Erskine, which pleased and gratified

* *L'Histoire d'un Crime.*

me very much and filled me with mournful recognition of probably the truest Christian man that was left in the world. *Eheu, eheu!*

But I certainly must stop here, there being more still to write, and the day falling down blacker and blacker in floods of rain.

My love and blessing to all and sundry of you. Write soon, if you can and will.

Ever your affectionate

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 391

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 26 Oct., 1878.

My dear Brother—I received your kind Letter the first thing this morning, and was sorry to find that it must have been written under pain and obstruction, in bad weather, in solitary imprisonment and other sorrows, which I daily think of with affectionate regret and am quite unable to help.

There has nothing new happened here. Our weather, too, is bad like yours, and I get out daily for a drive which, alas, you cannot do. I never look into your room without a sad regret that you are not here; but alas, you absolutely cannot come, and you would not be nearly so well lodged as where you are. We must hope and be patient.

I was naturally struck with the announcement of poor Laing's death. A considerable light of knowledge is thus extinguished, and a very harmless brother mortal is carried away into eternity before us. I seem somewhere to have learnt that his death was caused by a fall he got; but can find no confirma-

tion of it from Mary or otherwise.—Froude came home the day before yesterday looking little the better we thought for his long rustication; but ready to talk at great length, though about nothing I had much interest in. We took him up in the carriage to a Mme. De Novikoff, a Russian lady, and left him there at the hotel in Brooke St. It is likely he may be back again on Tuesday. But alas, I get extremely little good of any kind of company now left me in the world. . . . My reading has been desultory, discontinuous, and insignificant, namely from Swift's *Gulliver* and certain of his *Essays* and *Poems*. Gulliver I reckoned and reckon extremely clever, generally entertaining, too, and pleasant all except the *Horse* and *Yahoo* department, which I found extremely dirty and miserable. To-day, I have been trying Sterne whom I have not looked at for many years and cannot be said to have liked or got profit from. Skelton of Edinburgh, sent me his Book,* which you too, no doubt have got. If not, which is unlikely, I will at once send you this,—not on loan, but in gift. . . .

I remain, ever my dear Brother,

Affectionately yours,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 392

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 9 Nov., 1878.

My dear Brother—Your welcome letter of tidings has just arrived, for which we are very thankful. We have nothing here to report of sinister, much the contrary indeed, if we consider the financial earthquakes that are going on all around us,† from

* *Mary Stuart.*

† From the failure of the Glasgow Bank.

certain of which, we have in the last week almost miraculously escaped; nor in regard to health, have I anything that is truly bad to report. But the fact is, so far as I can read it, my strength is nearly faded quite away; and it begins to be made more and more evident to me that I shall not long have to struggle under this burden of life, but soon go to the refuge that is provided for us all. For a long time back, I have been accustomed to look upon the "*ernsten Freund*" as the most merciful and indispensable refuge appointed by the great Creator for his wearied children whose work is done. I read always, but can get no reading that is the least use to me. To-day I am reading Voltaire's *Zaire* and find it a tragedy almost contemptible to me and void of meaning or interest. . . .

Mrs. Allingham has for the last three days, been sitting painting me while I read,—one hour each day, and has made two small water-colour Sketches which appear to me to have a great deal of likeness. Boehm is in treaty about a Statue of Knox, which is actually going up as frontispiece to the Haddington Schoolhouse, and I hope may succeed with his project; at least if he do not, I can do nothing more. I have sent their Architect (Starforth, who built the Grayfriars Church at Dumfries) a complete copy of the Essay on the Knox Portraits. Boehm will do that figure of Knox* at the cheapest price; and the commonly received David Laing Knox or Torphichen Knox he will not for any money whatever attempt to carve. So we can do no more.

. . . God bless you all.

Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

* After the Somerville portrait.

LETTER 393

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 15 Nov., 1878.

My dear Brother—Thanks for your punctual Letter, which lay waiting me when I got in from my poor cripply walk half way down the Embankment. I am not now able to get to the bottom of the Embankment, but have to stop half way and rest a little and return. My limbs getting quite lame about the middle of the back part of the thighs, reminding me daily of old Ziethen's description to Friedrich: *Die Füsse wollen nicht fort.** I have been thinking even more constantly than ever of your imprisonment during these wild mornings, while even with us the weather has been so bad; and certainly, as I daily considered, it would be worse with you. I am not sure that you take the best plan in keeping your fire alight all night. Would it not be better to go to bed with a good warm fire and then to have it lighted again in the morning near rising time? There is an excellent recipe against cold, in down quilts to cover the feet or even the whole body if necessary, but probably, as Mary says, you already have one of these. The thick night socks are also very useful on the feet. I have these and also a soft red-flannel night-shirt (on the top of my ordinary night-shirt) coming down to my heels, which Mary has provided for me, and which I feel to be a great comfort. . . .

I have tried the Russian Pushkin, as I mentioned, already, without any fruit. I have been reading a Life of Maglia-

* See *Friedrich*, Bk. xxi., chap. 5.

becchi,*—which contains a hirsute portrait of him, one of the ruggedest and ugliest conceivable, and a good many details that seemed to me incredible. I have even been thinking to try and read again either Shakespear or the Bible, but have for the present a new French Book on Russian Literature which I must first dispatch, or dismiss. These are all my poor adventures, dear Brother, not worth detailing except to yourself. God grant us patience, is my constant prayer. The end surely is near and then all these troubles will have vanished. My kindest continual regards to Sister Jean. My blessing to all of you.

I ever am, Your affectionate Brother,

T. Carlyle.

LETTER 394

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 25 Jan., 1879.

My dear Brother—. . . We are very glad to hear, what has somewhat surprised us, that you have felt rather better than usual this week, which has here been of so grim a complexion. . . . I myself get along quite tolerably well, and almost always secure both warmth and sleep. . . . We have not seen Darwin for a week or more; but believe him to be lying quiet on his back, as usual, and employing himself quietly in reading. On the Sundays we omit carriage driving, and go usually in the omnibus to St. Paul's Cathedral, which is a beautiful serene place in itself and sometimes affords us, in the Anthem and Doxology, a peal of exquisite music from the

* A Florentine bibliophile, originally a goldsmith, latterly court-librarian to the Grand Duke of Tuscany. His own library, of 30,000 vols., is now a free library.

organ and *vox humana*. I am still reading various things,—at present Plutarch's Morals, in an excellent French translation, which is very pure and I might say equal to Christian in its sentiments; and does me if anything some good. There has been a little powdering of snow last night, which will, at least, *lay* the whirling storms of powdered brick which is laid over the streets for the sake of the horses. Mary and I go out together to-day without other companion. We are very glad to hear of Sister Jean and the rest being as well as usual; and send them our heartiest love.

Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 395*

To Dr. Carlyle, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 8 Feb., 1879.

My dear Brother—It is sad to me to read what you say about your "improvement" this week. Alas, the evil that remains to be improved is so great. It appears that you still cannot at all read, even with one eye, and are doomed all day to continue without employment. I do hope the right eye will recover soon; and that by the help of the left eye, and it, you will soon be able to read again.

You seem to have had a great deal more of suffering from

* This, our final letter, is, with one exception, the last that Carlyle wrote, and the very last in the correspondence with Dr. Carlyle, which had continued unbroken for over sixty years. Soon after its date Carlyle became rather seriously ill, and was unable even to dictate letters. As soon as his condition would permit, he went to Dumfries, accompanied by his niece, and occupied a furnished house there during the summer months. The brothers met almost every day, until shortly before Dr. Carlyle's death, which happened on the 15th of September of this year.

the cold than I have ever had here. Indeed there was no cold here at all comparable in intensity to your Scotch fit; but even at the worst, it was an insignificant part of my poor troubles; I was so quilted with clothes of all kinds, too, that it never got into me. I would have you to consider well whether you are not rather under-clad generally; and, if so, to make good that error. All feeling of cold has disappeared here for several days, and it almost seems as if Spring itself had arrived at this premature season. I can read too, when there are any worthy books procurable, which is by no means always the case. You, I expected, would have got some good of a pair of Bismarck books that have come to me, but, alas, you cannot read them at present.

Poor Mrs. Paulet is got out of all her troubles. I told you once, what she was suffering from,—asthma, and her utter weakness. She decided about a month ago, to go down to Essex to a Brother she had,—a clergyman there; but the reverse of good attended her, so far as the disorder went; and she died some ten days ago;—ending, as we cannot but hope, a great many miseries in exchange for peace. Alas, alas! The final mercy of God, it in late years always appears to me, is that He delivers us from a life which has become a task too hard for us.

O that I could hear of your getting out of doors, of being able to see, and above all of being able to drive in a carriage; but we must not be impatient. The news from Annandale all seem to be good. What I hear of Sister Jean is also favourable. Good be with you all. I send my poor blessing to you, were it of any value. Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. Carlyle.

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